13 July 1979 35p USA $1 By Air

NEW STATESMAN

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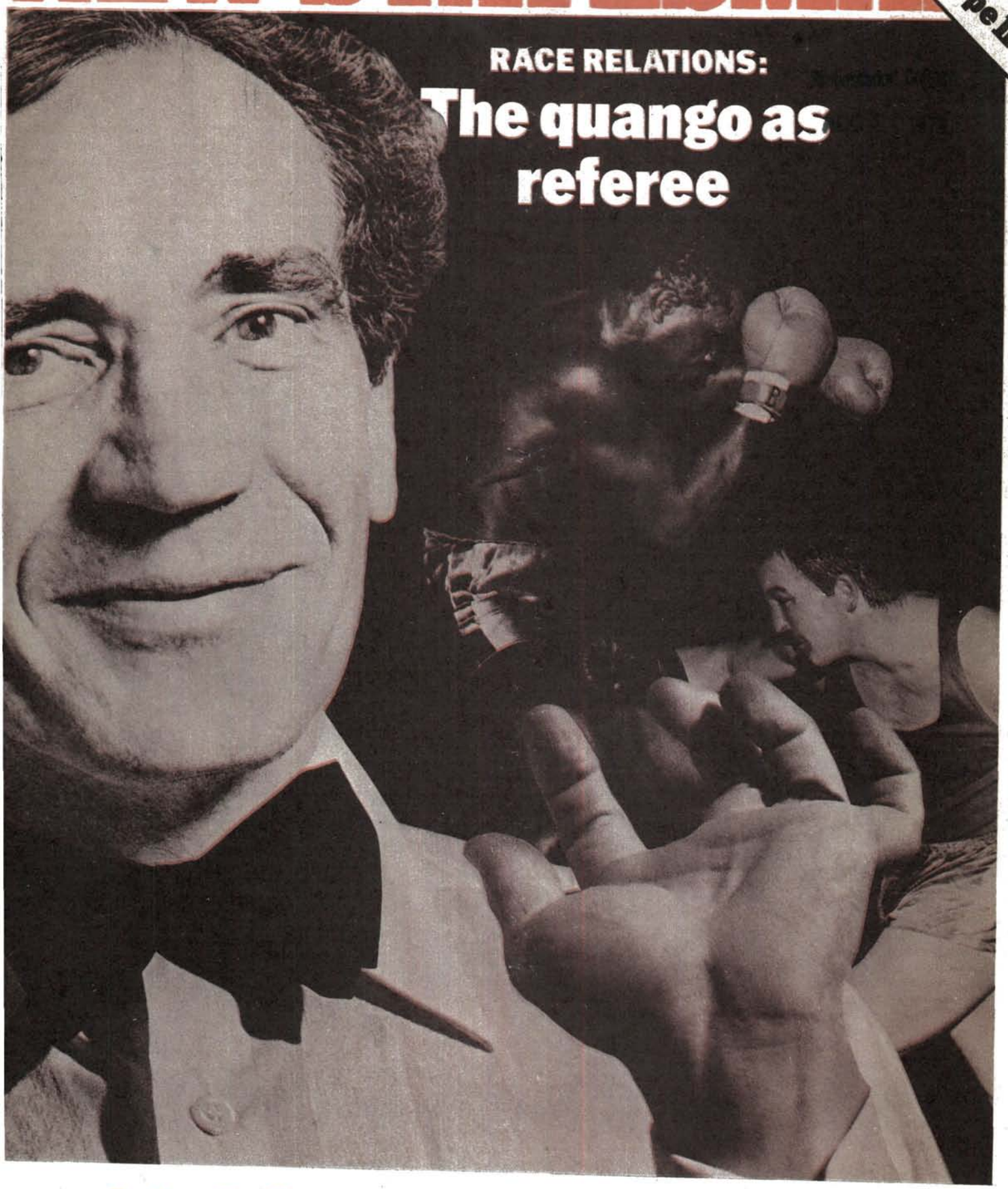

RACE RELATIONS: The quango as referee

John Arden: Ireland and British poets

Blake Morrison: new poetry/Hugh Brogan: Shawcross's 'Sideshow'
Olivia Manning on Mortimer and Mitchison
Alex Callinicos: Marxist studies

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Elitism and Labour

SHIRLEY WILLIAMS'S CONTENTION, that the campaign to democratise the Labour Party is creeping elitism, has at least the appearance of originality. Few of the party activists seeking a greater share of the party's decision-making will recognise themselves in this description. To anybody outside the charmed circle of ex-ministers, the threat of 'elitism' seems to come from quite another quarter – that inhabited by conformist back-benchers hoping for office, or Labour peers mocking the aspirations of their party. Mrs Williams implicitly recognises this when she speaks of reselection:

> MPs would be torn between obeying the whips and keeping a Labour government in power, or disobeying the whips and keeping their seats. This cannot be equated with democracy; for democracy holds that elected representatives are accountable to the people who elected them . . .

This is a false antithesis. What Mrs Williams is really saying is that MPs should be answerable to the whips, and to the unaccountable apparatus of patronage and bureaucracy which stands behind them. In other words, she is content with the status quo. In just the same way, she uses the old phrase 'unpopular policies', which translates as policies contradictory to the aims of Labour, to make her point about the apparent danger of 'rule by the General Management Committee'.

She brackets this point with a related one, which is the alleged unwillingness of 'men and woman of any imagination, courage or independence of spirit' to 'serve as mandated delegates from the GMCs.' Surely the truth is exactly the opposite. 'Unpopular policies' are precisely those which Labour exists to argue and fight for (and, incidentally, to popularise), and which the last government abandoned disastrously. It was able to do so because there are so few men and women of any imagination, courage or independence of spirit. The present PLP is overwhelmingly composed of members with 'safe' seats, insulated from any pressure from below but subjected to every kind of inducement from above. Who

It is not entirely to the point for Mrs Williams to contrast, in an attempt at irony, proposals to reform the party with proposals for industrial democracy. The Labour Party is a voluntary organisation, which cannot coerce anybody outside its own ranks in the way an all-inclusive society is bound to do. At present, the men and women who organise and make up the movement are excluded from any real say in its manifesto or its leadership, while those who make careers in politics for themselves are allowed to vote twice on everything and, if they do not like the result after that, to ignore it.

Those in and out of the party who have taken alarm at the latest moves are obviously not concerned with the form or the content of democracy. What does concern them – sometimes explicitly but more often unspokenly – is that the Left might be the beneficiary of any change in the rules. David Marquand chooses the context of an extreme Tory backlash to write that the division between socialists and social democrats is the deepest in British politics! This is the sort of language which almost openly appeals for a split. We do not know for sure that the Left would be better off with a more democratic Labour Party. But certainly the Right is the natural beneficiary of the present elitist and electorally disastrous set-up. If what Williams and Marquand really mean is that hierarchy benefits 'social democracy' and democracy benefits socialism, that's fine. If the party splits it will be their fault.

NOTES

J. C. at Calvary

Claudia Wright writes from Washington: President Carter has decided to run for re-election as Jesus Christ. Faced with a desperate predicament over his energy policy, he retreated last week into the mountain wilderness of Camp David, where he has been reported washing the feet of State Governors, Union and black leaders, and Clark Clifford, the lawyer who helped rescue his old friend, Bert Lance. This is the week of Carter's crucifixion. The problem the White House is having is to ensure the resurrection before election day. Barabbas could take the country at the moment.

His major speech on energy was cancelled last Thursday because he had nothing to say. The speech, the idea of media advisers, Powell and Rafshoon, was supposed to assert presidential initiative after the OPEC conference obliterated whatever gains Carter's image had made at the Tokyo summit.

But rescuing one maladroit piece of image-making brought on an even worse case of the fumbles at the weekend, when the White House decided to leak to the Press a confidential plan from Carter's senior domestic policy assistant, Stuart Eizenstat. The plan, according to Eizenstat, is to change the situation 'to a time of opportunity . . . to assert leadership over an apparently insoluble problem, to shift the cause for inflation and energy problems to OPEC, to gain credibility with the American people, to offer hope of an eventual solution, to regain our political losses . . . with strong steps we can mobilise the nation around a real crisis and with a clear enemy OPEC.'

Cabled to Carter in Tokyo, the memorandum resulted in a stinging presidential denunciation of the OPEC price rise, and marked the first time the administration had publicly blamed OPEC for its problems. In December, when producers had announced a 15 per cent price increase, the White House went out of its way to minimise the economic impact, and has maintained this position during six months of price leapfrogging, while it tried to negotiate with Saudi Arabia for production increases. As Carter attacked OPEC verbally, the CIA launched its own disinformation offensive, designed to aggravate tension between OPEC members and prise the Saudis away from the others. A doctored English translation of a Damascus interview given by the Libyan Leader, Colonel Gaddafi, was passed to the American wire services and given front-page display here on 30 June. In the Arabic text Gaddafi said that if American and Egyptian threats to invade Libya did not stop, if the Americans could not halt devaluation of the dollar, and if the industrial countries would not reduce the price increases on their exports, then 'Libya can in the final analysis reduce or even stop oil production'. In the version highlighted by the American press, Gaddafi's hypothetical was transformed into a direct threat to stop oil exports momentarily without any precondition.

With this statement the Americans intended to apply pressure to the Saudis to increase their output by another million barrels daily. The point was emphasised when the Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs, Richard Cooper, arrived in Riyadh last Monday. The Saudi response was to issue an anonymous radio announcement that production levels would be increased 'temporarily' following a meeting 'to be held in several days'. The announcement produced banner headlines and relief again in Washington, although State Department officials say they do not believe the Saudis intend any substantial rise in oil production. By divulging its anti-OPEC memorandum the White House has shredded what is left of its credibility with the Saudis, and irreversibly stepped up its antagonism towards the Arab Middle East.

Northfield's cold potato

Brian Wilson writes: The Northfield Committee, which, for the past two years, has been looking into 'the acquisition and occupancy of agricultural land', surprised nobody on Tuesday by announcing there is nothing left to worry about in recent trends; that private landlords should be protected through tax concessions; and that the public ownership of land is definitely not something to be encouraged. The establishment of the committee was announced by Mr John Silkin in the Country Landowners' Association pavilion at the Royal Bath and West Show of 1977. Writing in *The Field*, the Association's secretary-general warmly approved of the 'balanced and sensible' team which Mr Silkin selected to serve under Lord Northfield, formerly the right-wing Labour MP for the Birmingham constituency of that name. This meant that the committee was made up of landowners and estate managers, leavened by one tenant farmer, a token representative of the Agricultural Workers' Union, and a former agricultural correspondent of the *Daily Express*.

Their lengthy report was presented this week to a press conference at the Ministry of Agriculture. Lord Northfield opined that they had been dealing with 'the hottest political potato in our society – the ownership of land'. Their conclusions were scarcely political dynamite, however. Financial institutions 'are trying to behave like the best of good landlords they are replacing'. The government 'should take steps to steady the decline of the private landlord'.

The public ownership of land was dismissed in a few lines, 'on agricultural grounds'. If tax concessions, particularly on Capital Transfer Tax, did not allow landowners to hang on to their acres, they should transfer them to charitable trusts 'to maintain continuity of ownership'. Foreign ownership was not a problem for the present, but should be 'monitored' by the government, lest speculation should creep in. Why monitor foreigners for speculative activities while giving free rein to indigenous speculators and absentee landlords? 'It is a matter of public sensitivity, I would guess,' said Lord Northfield.

Illegitimate proposal

Katherine Gieve writes: The Law Commission last week proposed that children born outside marriage should have exactly the same legal relationship with their parents as those born inside marriage, regardless of family arrangements. The move has been welcomed on almost all sides, even by the church. Such a change would make little difference to the children themselves, since the legal disadvantages suffered by illegitimate offspring are, under current law, very slight indeed. It would, however, greatly increase the rights of unwed fathers and, as a direct consequence, undermine the rights of single mothe

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IT'S ALL THE RAGE WITH WORLD LEADERS— HOW DOES IT FEEL??
WELL, IT FEELS LIKE A MILLION DOLLARS—BUT IT STILL LOOKS LIKE TWENTY-THREE —FIFTY!
ALL ONE PRICE
Ralph STEADMAN 79
THE FIFTY DOLLAR SUIT

NOTES

– who bear the main responsibility for bringing up their children.

A single mother would lose her sole right to custody: at present, this can be challenged in court by the father, who will generally be granted access if he has taken some responsibility for the child. Under the new rule, a father would (once paternity was proved) automatically gain all the rights of a married father, even if he had taken no interest in the child. The burden would then be on the mother to extinguish the rights, if need be, by going to court herself. The new philosophy has been well expressed by the Law Society's *Gazette*:

> If a means can be found of integrating the father into the family unit by providing him with rights (as well as responsibilities) instead of forcing him out of it then the interests of everyone are better protected: the children have a father, the mother is supported (and may not have to seek state benefits) and society has tamed a few would-be Casanovas.

It is ironic that the Law Commission's proposal should arrive on the fifth anniversary of the Finer Report on one-parent families (most of whose recommendations have still not been implemented). One of Finer's most important findings was that more than half of Britain's single parents received maintenance for their children irregularly or not at all – and according to the National Council for One-Parent Families, the position has not changed in five years. Many single mothers prefer not to be dependent on the fathers of their children, but the Law Commission does not take this into account. It simply allows fathers to have joint custody of their children and the right to take decisions affecting their future, even if they have contributed nothing in terms of child care or financial support. There is a danger that some men will threaten to exercise their new rights of custody unless the mother promises not to seek maintenance (a device lawyers have found to be familiar in divorce proceedings). And fear of this may inhibit women from putting the father's name on the birth certificate.

The Law Commission (on which men outnumber women by 15 to 2) accepts that the rights of mothers will be eroded, but has decided that it is a price worth paying for abolishing the stigma of illegitimacy. The only voice of dissent from this view comes from feminists, who point out that a great many children will continue to live alone with their mothers and that a change in the law would do nothing to alleviate the practical discrimination they suffer. They also question the idea that only a man can 'legitimise' a child.

Trouble at Transport House

Patrick Wintour writes: Despite having been granted their full 27 per cent wage claim this week, Labour Party staff are seething at the way in which management handled the dispute. Transport House management consists of men such as John Golding, former Department of Employment Minister, Sam McCluskie of the Seamen, Tom Bradley, former President of the Transport Salaried Staffs Association, and Russell Tuck of the Railwaymen. These immensely experienced negotiators make up the Staff Negotiations Committee, a sub-committee of the NEC.

Hard as it is to believe, the trade unions that represent the staff of the Labour Party HQ – mainly T&G, APEX and NUJ – have no right of negotiation with management nor any right to have a meeting. Instead they have to await an invitation to present a claim to the Committee. Since the Committee meets only once a month, it is difficult for the Transport House unions to communicate regularly with such a management. Even when last week the full NEC instructed their negotiations sub-committee to settle immediately, it took the sub-committee five days to gather together. It was this delay that led to last week's walk-out. But tempers had already been raised at the aggressive way in which the sub-committee negotiated with the staff unions. The staff, worried by 40 per cent turnover and low pay, imagined the claim could have been settled in more comradely fashion without John Golding, for example, giving them lectures on how to negotiate.

The Transport House staff were also surprised at the way in which the Negotiations Committee immediately handed out large increases to other groups before they settled with staff. The Agents and Organisers have received a 40 per cent rise and the Heads of Department over 60 per cent for the last two years with more already promised for next year. The large increases to organisers will please David Basnett of the GMWU who wishes to revitalise this aspect of the Party. Basnett looks like leading Callaghan's resistance to the Left. At the last NEC meeting a letter was read out announcing that Trade Unionists for a Labour Victory is to become a permanent body. It may become a standard bearer for the trade union Right.

● *The Commonwealth conference will no doubt be told by Mrs Thatcher that the British people endorse her plan to recognise the Muzorewa regime. The Anti-Apartheid movement is collecting signatures for a declaration to be handed to President Kaunda when the conference opens. The declaration opposes recognition and calls for genuine independence for Zimbabwe. Those wishing to add their names should contact the AAM at 89 Charlotte Street, London W1P 2DQ.*

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The secret war for Ireland

The war in Northern Ireland, seen from Whitehall's operations rooms, is wholly different from its public image. The two articles following illuminate different aspects of the secret war with the IRA. STEPHEN SCOTT explains how MI6 recruited a drugs smuggler to monitor IRA arms deals. Scott's investigation was to have been transmitted on London Weekend Television's London Programme last week, but was cancelled at the last minute.

DUNCAN CAMPBELL discusses the secret army intelligence report which states plainly that talk of 'getting on top of the gunmen' is a pipedream.

Howard Marks disappears

Hamilton McMillan and Howard Marks as freshmen Balliol undergraduates; the recruiter and the secret agent.

HOWARD MARKS, a 33-year-old Oxford graduate, is still coming and going freely from Britain five years after he disappeared from his home and avoided standing trial on charges which would probably have left him still in prison. The circumstances of his sudden disappearance have never been fully explained. But new evidence proves that they are closely linked to the activities of MI6, Britain's Secret Intelligence Service.

In 1972, through a former undergraduate colleague, he was recruited by enticement or blackmail into their service to spy on IRA arms dealing. He was pushed closer into arms and drugs dealing in Europe and America.

Howard Marks graduated in physics from Oxford University in 1967. Five years later, after a chequered further education, he was back in Oxford running a boutique, dabbling in property speculation and stamp dealing with little success. He became closely involved with large scale drugs smuggling through another Oxford friend, Gordon Plinston, also now wanted in several countries. In the drugs business, Marks and Plinston came to know well a Provisional IRA arms dealer then based in Amsterdam, James McCann.

McCann, a well known IRA activist, had escaped from Crumlin Road prison in 1971. Mark's arrival in the *milieu* had not escaped the notice of British and foreign authorities. In 1972, according to Marks, he was approached by his former Balliol friend called 'Mac'. Mac told Marks that he was a member of MI6, and that unless he co-operated, he would be turned over to the customs. Marks agreed to co-operate.

It is, of course, notoriously difficult to separate fact from fiction in stories of the secret agencies and their contacts. In the case of Howard Marks, however, his involvement is confirmed by fresh information: the police report investigating his disappearance in April 1974, which has been seen by the programme's reporters. Marks had been entirely indiscreet – indeed braggardly – about his intelligence connection, and it quickly came to the attention of the policemen investigating his absconding from bail. The police superintendent in charge of the enquiry was summoned to the offices of the Security Service to be told by the Service's legal adviser, Bernard Shelton, that Marks had been in 1973, 'an agent for MI6'. He added:

> A former Balliol college fellow undergraduate of Marks, who is now an MI6 officer, contacted Marks with a view to using his company 'Annabelinda', which also had a shop in Amsterdam as a cover for his activities. He later realised that Marks was engaged in certain activities and requested him to obtain information concerning the Provisional IRA.

'Mac' – the Balliol undergraduate who recruited Marks – is Norman Hamilton McMillan, who joined the Foreign Office in 1968. He now works – quite openly – as a First Secretary in the Rome embassy. Marks, McMillan remembered, was a mildly right of centre hearty, scarcely discreet about his own associations. Balliol comtemporaries, including a NEW STATESMAN reporter, knew well that he had joined MI6. An Oxford solicitor who knew Marks told police the same story:

Howard Marks as the drug smuggling hippie and his MI6 assigned target. Provisional IRA arms smuggler James McCann.

'some time before, it had been rumoured and gossiped about that a former Balliol student who is now an MI6 officer was recruiting for agents.'

The version of the recruitment story given to Superintendent Fairweather, investigating Marks's disappearance, was that Marks had only been an agent 'at one time, for a short period'. It was said that 'in September 1973, however, his superiors instructed the (MI6) officer to sever contact with Marks'. But this version of the story – which may be all the MI6 was prepared to tell the independently run Security Service – seems to be far less than the truth. MI6's involvement with Marks ran longer and deeper than a former chum's 1973 whim to use his Annabelinda boutique as cover for MI6 work.

MARKS AND HIS RECRUITER Hamilton McMillan had been close as students. But when McMillan went back to look up his old friend in 1972, it wasn't exactly friendly. According to Marks, MI6 knew all about his drug smuggling from the start and simply blackmailed him into working for them. The work was certainly dangerous. The police report tends to confirm this earlier association: Marks's common law wife, Rosie Brindley, who was living with him when he disappeared, told police how 'Mac' visited Marks late in 1972 and made the recruitment pitch. Her account – judged 'truthful' by the police – was that his assignment was to report on the Irish arms dealer McCann. He also told his mother, 'a person of the highest character', that MI6 had assigned him to gather information about James McCann.

To answer these enquiries he was inevitably pushed further into the drugs underworld. Marks got to know McCann increasingly well. He stayed at his home at Greystones near Dublin. When he and his girl friend Rosie holidayed in Ibiza in early 1973, McCann flew out to join them. But by the end of 1973, things were going seriously wrong.

In September, the US end of the major drugs conspiracy was busted. The ring, said to involve Plinston and Marks as the major European partners, had arranged to smuggle vast quantities of cannabis to the US from Europe concealed inside musical and electronic equipment. By chance, part of the drugs shipment was discovered in New York, and the investigation quickly closed in.

In October 1973, McCann's girlfriend was arrested in Hamburg and questioned in depth about his activities. McCann began to suspect that Marks was an informant. Soon after this, McCann was unsuccessfully ambushed in his hotel by a number of well armed men – he claims it was an attempt by British Intelligence to assassinate him, set up by Howard Marks. Before McCann took revenge however, Marks himself had been arrested in Amsterdam, the unfortunate victim of a chance raid on a drugs dealing friend while he was present.

Marks was held while charges were investigated, but apparently was not implicated in the charges against his friend and would eventually have been released. But news of his arrest reached British customs, however, over the Interpol network, and two customs officers flew to Amsterdam. Curiously, although

Mark's police file photographs, taken by Dutch police after his arrest in Amsterdam in 1973.

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Marks was not liable to extradition, he agreed voluntarily to return to Britain, and was remanded to Brixton prison. Soon afterwards, however, he was released on bail of £50,000, to face trial at the Old Bailey in May 1974, on charges of conspiring to import £4m worth of cannabis from Europe to the States.

THE TRIAL WAS going to be bad news for both Marks and MI6. Having been extricated, perhaps, from personal danger in Amsterdam, he now faced up to 14 years in gaol. He began to work on a defence in which he recounted his career as an intelligence agent. Such revelations would have been acutely embarrassing early in 1974. In March, Kenneth Littlejohn was on the run from an Irish prison and telling the whole world that while he was robbing Irish banks, he was working for British intelligence. The weekend before Marks disappeared, Special Branch and MI6 informer Kenneth Lennon was found shot dead in a Surrey ditch. The Security Service were aware of the problems that yet another scandal would cause. Pressing the police to keep the disappearance investigation secret, their legal adviser expressed fears that: 'the case could become another Littlejohn with Marks using his small but true involvement with MI6 as his defence for his criminal activities'.

Marks certainly felt that MI6 was still his shield; in prison at Brixton, he told his parents once again that he was working for MI6 and gave them a name and telephone number to contact if needed. The name was McMillan, the telephone number, 01-928 5600, is known to be the telephone number of the Secret Intelligence Service.

There must have been sighs of relief at Century House when, on 19th April 1974, Marks suddenly disappeared. The police reported on the events of the day, but could not explain them. He was at home in Oxford, when according to his landlady he was called on by an Englishman, a rough-looking thug with blond hair and gold-filled teeth. He was heard to refer to 'Customs and Excise', and after speaking to him, Marks came out to her:

> As she stood on the landing, Marks handed her the baby and asked her to look after it as he had to go. She states that Marks looked very shocked, shaken and upset, near to tears and he was trembling. She said to him, 'Is it very bad', and he replied, 'yes it is'.

Marks walked out of his house, jumped bail, and fled to Italy without a word to his girlfriend, or even pausing to pick up his jacket.

There is no evidence linking MI6 with his disappearance. But there is evidence that the connection continued after his disappearance. In September 1974, while visiting their daughter in Italy, his parents met Howard for the first time since his disappearance. He told them he had been abducted, but refused to say by whom. Asked if he was still involved with the MI6, he said:

> I am not telling you anything. I have been told not to say anything and I am still under a threat.

His parents recounted several meetings with Howard in Italy to police shortly before they themselves had to appear at the Old Bailey, to decide whether their bail money should be forfeited. It was decided that they should not lose their money. The decision was, to say the least, generous. They had only a few days before admitted failing to report their contact with Howard on their return.

The intelligence services seem also to have been involved in handling the case against Marks. One of two customs officers who brought him back, Mark Elliot, has been involved in intelligence work. In 1974, McCann publicly alleged that Elliott headed a joint intelligence operation against him; subsequently, Elliott's whereabouts were concealed because of threats to his life.

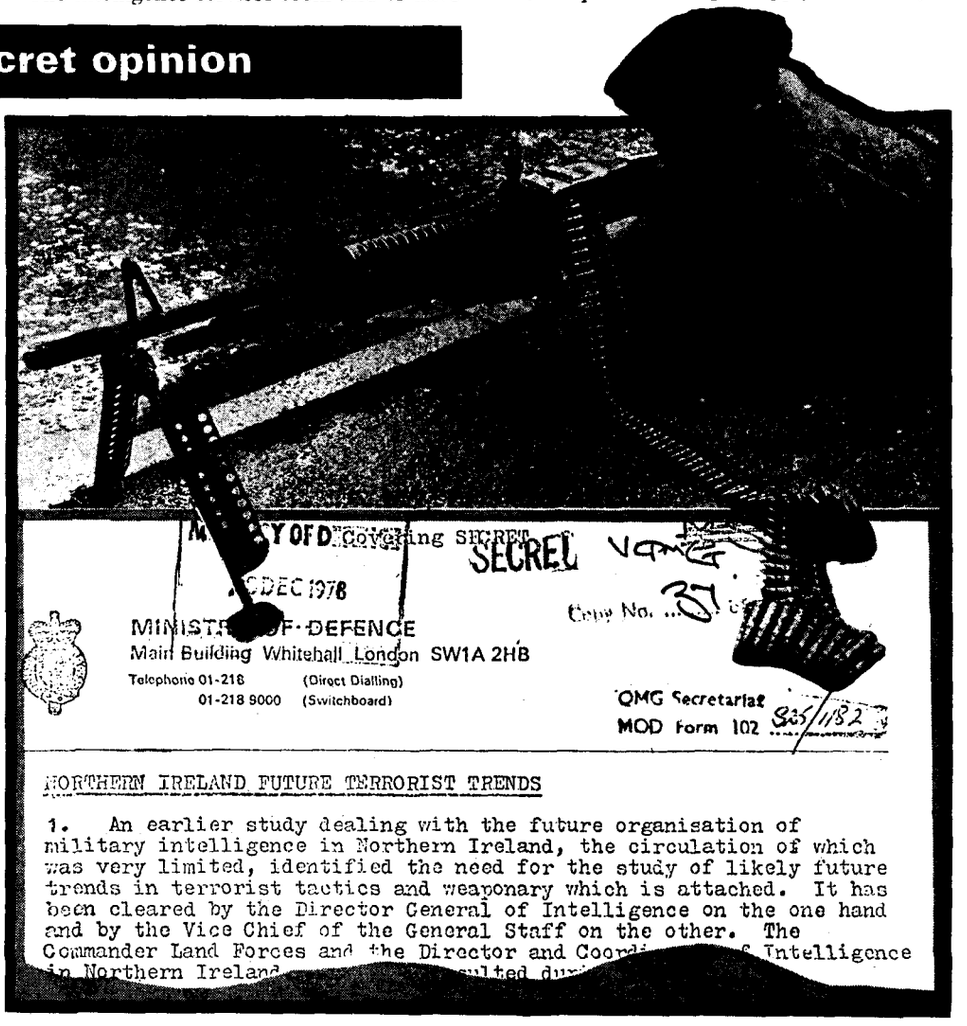
The most recent evidence of continuing concern by MI6 centres on the Oxford boutique Annabelinda, which is still run by two old friends of Howard Marks, Redmond and Belinda O'Hanlon. Marks' MI6 controllers had asked him to arrange the setting up of branches of Annabelinda in Amsterdam and Zurich to carry out covert operations. Redmond O'Hanlon nervously confirmed to police that Marks had told him that McMillan suggested opening a branch of Annabelinda in Zurich so that the Security Services could put a girl agent in it, making them independent of the 'embassy'. When London Weekend researchers contacted O'Hanlon earlier this year, he was helpful and very knowledgeable about Howard's MI6 connections. This however changed suddenly; pressed, he said that he had been approached by MI6 and told that he would find it difficult to get his academic work – then apparently handled by another Oxford college, St Antony's – published in future if he co-operated with the TV inquiry.

It comes as little surprise that MI6, matching wits against IRA arms smugglers, was ready to talk to those in the underworld with information to offer. It is more surprising that they should encourage illegal activity in fostering these ends, and send old college chums in pursuit of one another to do so, providing when required an ample supply of blind eyes.

The army's secret opinion

'THE CAMPAIGN of violence is likely to continue while the British remain in Northern Ireland'. There is 'no prospect in the next five years of any political change' which would remove the raison d'être of the Provisional IRA. With these conclusions the secret military intelligence appreciation of *Northern Ireland, Future Terrorist Trends* wraps up and buries a thousand speeches of politicians who have promised that the army will wipe out the gunmen.

Northern Ireland, Future Terrorist Trends is a study prepared by the most senior army officer on the Defence Intelligence Staff, Brigadier J. M. Glover. The report was written early last November, and subsequently fell into the hands of the IRA. Since then the report has received some publicity in Irish Republican circles but has been ignored by the British media. It was circulated to army commands in December after clearance and approval at the highest level. Glover himself, now promoted to Major General, recently became Commander of Land Forces in Northern Ireland — a clear indication that his report must broadly represent the view of Northern Ireland held inside the Ministry of Defence. Nevertheless, many in authority did not see the paper – not because of its secret classification but because it belongs to the army spheres of preparation and action and was not intended for policymakers and politicians. The distribution shows that not one copy was sent to Ministers, either in the Northern Ireland Office or the Defence Ministry.



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NORTHERN IRELAND FUTURE TERRORIST TRENDS

1. An earlier study dealing with the future organisation of military intelligence in Northern Ireland, the circulation of which was very limited, identified the need for the study of likely future trends in terrorist tactics and weaponary which is attached. It has been cleared by the Director General of Intelligence on the one hand and by the Vice Chief of the General Staff on the other. The Commander Land Forces and the Director and Coord... Intelligence in Northern Ireland ...sulted dur...

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The single most notable conclusion is that there is no sign of any end of the war. Brigadier Glover confined his study to a forecast of the next five years and excluded consideration of IRA activities on the UK mainland or the loyalist paramilitary groups. His report is intensely cynical about the chances of restoring peace. The intelligence specialists have not substantially altered their view since the previous study which noted:

> The Provisional IRA (PIRA) has the dedication and the sinews of war to raise violence intermittently to at least the level of early 1978, certainly for the foreseeable future. Even if 'peace' is restored, the motivation for politically inspired violence will remain. Arms will be readily available and there will be many who are able and willing to use them. Any peace will be superficial and brittle. A new campaign may well erupt in the years ahead.

The paper rejects any future political development – save the continuation of direct rule from Westminster – as offering any hope of a diminution in the scale of violence. There are five options – the continuation of direct rule; the addition of a new constituent assembly within the direct rule framework; the unlikely restoration of the Stormont or other parliament; and a move towards independence which might take firmer root. But the fifth option was more exciting.

> A new party based on socialist policies transcending sectarian barriers may emerge. But similar attempts since 1922 have always ended in failure. In Ireland the appeal of sectarianism and nationalistic sentiment has always been stronger than that of left wing ideology. The continuing polarisation of the population on sectarian lines only emphasises the improbability of such an initiative.

Despite a muted reference to 'independence', the sixth option – British withdrawal – is not mentioned. It remains a subversive heresy within the army. Of the five listed options the army has its favourite — continued direct rule. The other policies would give more support to the Provisionals through nurturing fears in the Catholic community of a re-established Protestant ascendancy. But even this offers no guarantee of a more peaceful future.

> Only . . . continued direct rule offers any real prospect of political calm and hence a waning support for the terrorist during the next five years. Under any other scenario Republican fears of a Protestant ascendency being re-established would enable PIRA to pose as the defenders of the minority interest. Even if the present system of government is maintained the current muted support for the forces of law and order will remain delicately balanced and susceptible to any controversial government decision or Security Forces action. We can see no prospect in the next five years of any political change which would remove the PIRA's raison d'être.

The Army's analysts are well aware that they have provided with this option no scope for politicians to do anything more than bluster. No real solution is foreseen or attempted: 'Government policy would be principally one of containment and the underlying problems would remain the same.'

While these problems remain unsolved the military organisation of the IRA will continue to find a ready pool of young aspirants who, the army somewhat whimsically suggests, are 'eagerly seeking promotion to full gun-carrying terrorist status'. Although the organisation is now smaller and its public support diminished since the early 1970s, it still can tap a rich vein of recruits. The report admits that the Provisionals are essentially a working class organisation, based in the ghetto areas of the city and in the poorer rural areas. Middle class members and graduates exist, even though they have to forfeit their normal life style. The Army thinks that some of these potential middle class recruits are deterred by the Provisional's 'muddled political thinking'.

The report suggests that only middle class members can provide 'the intelligent astute and experienced terrorists who provide the backbone of the organisation'. But it does make clear that PIRA has adequate resources to continue providing explosives and bombs for its needs, including small workshops and laboratories. The terrorists' abilities, their professionalism, and their expertise are all on the increase, the army believe. Indeed, substitute 'soldier' for 'terrorist' in the study and the report might almost be a careful appreciative analysis of an allied army.

THIS COMES out most clearly in the army's protrait of the rank and file terrorist:

> Our evidence of the calibre of rank and file terrorists does not support the view that they are merely mindless hooligans drawn from the unemployed and unemployable. PIRA now trains and uses its members with some care. The Active Service Units (ASUs) are for the most part manned by terrorists tempered by up to ten years of operational experience.
>
> The mature terrorists, including for instance the leading bomb makers, are usually sufficiently cunning to avoid arrest. They are continually learning from mistakes and developing their expertise. We can therefore expect to see increasing professionalism and the greater exploitation of modern technology for terrorist purposes.

From a high ranking and highly-qualified officer in the British Army, the Provisional IRA could hardly have had a greater compliment. It is an attitude in complete contrast to that of Roy Mason who continually characterised the IRA as hoodlums and thugs.

Much of the report consists of careful analysis of the types of weapons and munitions available to the IRA together with their effectiveness, availability and price. They estimate that some 1700 PIRA members and activists may have available some 4000 handguns, machine guns and rifles. The army only knows of stocks of 800 such weapons but their estimate is that the IRA's 'actual holdings are probably five times larger'.

The IRA's operations are increasingly designed to be 'safe' so that the attacker has a high probability of escaping. The main types of weapons used are available in sufficient quantity, although there is a search for 'prestige' weapons which attract publicity even if they are militarily ineffective – mortars, anti-aircraft guns, and missiles. The increasing skill of the bomb constructors is noted with care – the PIRA Mark 9 mortar, for example, is 'effective and simple to make'.

The IRA are not expected to become involved with attempts to create nuclear, biological or chemical weapons, although these activities now seem to form a standard part of any popular appreciation of the 'terrorist threat'.

The great myth of modern terrorism, is that of the 'terrorist internationale', characterised as a multinational threat to western democratic society, with numerous insinuations of connections between the IRA, the PLO, the Japanese Red Army and West German terrorists. Familiar *bêtes noirs* appear – Soviet gold, Colonel Gaddafi of Libya, all orchestrated by a convenient Godfather – currently Carlos, and formerly Yasser Arafat Newspapers report terrorist summit conferences. It is all nonsense.

It is, however, profitable nonsense. Take for example, *The Weapons of Terror*, a recent money-spinner from the stable of *Sunday Telegraph* reporters Christopher Dobson and Ronald Payne, self styled as 'internationally known specialists', who blandly assert that there are 'contacts with Breton and Basque separatists, and some link with Palestinians, particularly the PFLP . . . Colonel Gaddafi has given them financial support and a small amount of arms.'

The army intelligence report is clear on these points: 'we doubt whether the PIRA receives financial aid from Libya or any other overseas government'. It also dismisses the Soviet gold story: 'There are no indications of any substantial link between the Soviet Union and either wing of the IRA, nor do we expect any links developing in the next five years'.

Although Soviet arms have reached the province, and have been intercepted *en route*, such shipments 'did not implicate the Soviet authorities.' As for the Middle East connection, although arms had been bought there and it remained a 'valuable source' of weapons, the PIRA feared 'that close association with other political ideologies would tarnish the essential Irishness of their movement.' They would be unlikely to accept any help that came with political strings attached – if for no better reason than that they are already adequately well off for arms and resources.

The only links considered of significance by the army are with the United States and Canada, Australia and New Zealand, where supporters may provide up to £120,000 a year. The rest of a guesstimated £950,000 annual PIRA budget comes mostly from thefts. The most active terrorists are believed to receive about £20 a week for their work.

THE LEAKING of this document may have left the army dismayed and the IRA delighted. But its real significance for the future of the province lies with the wider public from whom it was intended that such honest thinking should be kept away. The military head of the Defence Intelligence Staff says here that the present war in Ireland cannot be won. The IRA will continue, for the foreseeable future, to wage attrition against the British presence.

The politicians may now deny that things are quite so gloomy, or that the army intelligence specialists are right to dismiss the political options so readily. But the army have the advantage both of history and operational experience; Whitehall's tinkering around with a little bit more government or a little bit less government has never been a substitute for tackling a problem at its roots. Politicians may speak of 'overcoming' the gunmen and terrorists, but the army knows it cannot de done. The only strategy the army does not evaluate is the strategy of withdrawal – which is tantamount to military defeat – because British withdrawal has always been the first objective of the IRA. But between the lines the Intelligence Staff infer that the only peaceful future for Northern Ireland may lie in a radical change of policy. If the army has been right in their analysis of their own position then withdrawal is the only option which should now be canvassed.

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GRANADA TELEVISION THE STATE OF THE NATION

A cabinet minister leaves a confidential document in a restaurant. A journalist picks it up. The document indicates that the government is on the point of attracting a major American firm to make a big investment in Britain by setting up a factory in the Titchbourne Estuary. But it involves the danger of environmental pollution from toxic waste. Ministers are convinced that the firm will pull out unless secrecy is preserved, since it would not wish to launch such an important enterprise in an atmosphere of controversy.

What does the journalist do?
Does the government try to stop him?
Can a television company be stopped from transmitting the story?
What do the law officers do to prevent publication?

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Anatomy of a 'political animal'

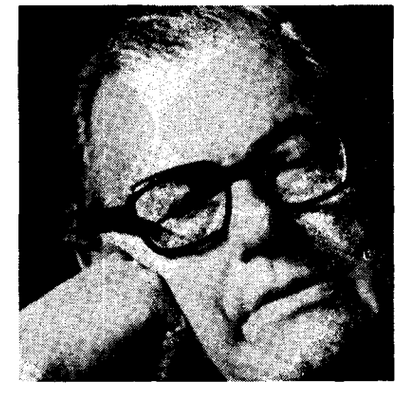
What are the rules of the game in backstairs intrigue at Westminster? PETER CHIPPINDALE and DAVID LEIGH show how Jeremy Thorpe used his connection with Reginald Maudling to juggle with the official record of his dealings with Norman Scott.

'JEREMY THORPE is a political animal'. These were the words used by his counsel, Mr George Carman QC, in trying to justify some remarkable manoeuvres on Thorpe's part, aimed variously at the distorting of official police records, and at the procuring of false evidence capable of diverting the course of justice. Last week, we dealt with the financial and business attitudes which were exhibited by Mr Thorpe as a substantial British politician at the height of his career. Here we deal with the behaviour which is to be expected from a 'political animal' anxious to suppress evidence which he happens to find embarrassing. The picture which emerges is of a man supremely and ruthlessly skilful in pulling the strings and manipulating the rules of a secretive and deferential society.

Notoriously, the crisis which came to a head at the Old Bailey this year began in 1971 when Norman Scott presented himself at the House of Commons along with the late Gwen Parry-Jones, an eccentric Welsh Liberal who had recently befriended him. He poured out to David Steel, the Liberal Whip, and Emlyn Hooson QC, the MP for Montgomeryshire, his wretched complaints of sexual mistreatment received from Jeremy Thorpe.

Homosexual behaviour was by then perfectly legal: but the fact remained that the recital, if true, was a shocking one. Nobody now can guess what might have happened if Thorpe had chosen – in suitable confidence – to admit to his political colleagues some part of the truth about himself. It is certainly difficult to believe that the whole grisly drama would have been played out as it was. But in any case, he did not. Right from the start, he chose to bluff them into accepting that no substantial part of Scott's tale was true – involving, in the end, policemen, lawyers, journalists and politicians in a vast structure of deceit which was remarkable, not so much for the fact that it eventually collapsed, but for the fact that it endured as long as it did. And his first stratagem was a conspiracy which involved himself, Peter Bessell, the Home Secretary, and the Chief Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police.

When Thorpe was elected leader in 1967, homosexuality was on its last legs as a criminal offence: neither then, nor now, could it be demanded of an ambitious politician that he should deliberately confess to such a trait. True, a more outspoken attitude – or a specific defence of homosexuality – might be capable of shifting public attitudes. But Jeremy Thorpe never chose that line. He did not speak in the crucial Parliamentary debate which eventually freed homosexuals from the criminal law. And he maintained in public the position that homosexuality was an 'indecent' secret.



Sir John Waldron (above), Chief Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, was drawn into a complex intrique – organised by Thorpe, with the aid of Reginald Maudling – aimed at 'fixing the record'.

HOOSON, who was certainly no friend of Thorpe's, grilled Scott closely, and discovered that Peter Bessell had been giving money to him, on Thorpe's behalf. Raised on the phone, Bessell said: 'It was bound to come out some time. I have been covering-up for him for years . . . It has cost me a lot of money. I will tell you about it when we meet.'

What followed next was a dazzling display of political intrigue, orchestrated by Thorpe – which remained wholly secret for many years and only emerged in part before a baffled jury at the Old Bailey. Bessell, apparently, was horrified to learn that Hooson thought Thorpe ought to resign – reasoning that if Thorpe was trying to conceal the Scott connection, he was open to blackmail. Bessell rushed to Thorpe's house to issue warning. (Hooson meanwhile telephoned Steel.)

Next day Hooson found that Bessell, after his visit to Thorpe, was blandly denying that their conversation had ever taken place. Hooson, who had been Thorpe's rival for the leadership, realised that he was being cast in the role of malicious muckraker. Bessell's denial 'seemed to have raised grave doubts about me in the eyes of my colleagues', he said later.

Still, Steel and Hooson were not ready to accept completely Thorpe's pitch: which was that Scott had long plagued him and his family on the strength of one-time acts of friendship. There was no homosexual relationship. Thorpe denied that he was responsible for Bessell's actions, or that Bessell had 'covered up' for him.

Steel and Hooson thought that perhaps all this should be reported to the Parliamentary Liberal Party. Thorpe countered with the idea of a secret 'court', to be chaired by his old friend Lord Byers, known since Jo Grimond's time as 'The Colonel'. (Byers continued to maintain, until Thorpe's own conclusive admissions, that he was 'jolly good' at detecting homosexuals, and that 'Jeremy isn't one'.)

Scott had given a garbled account of having been arrested at the Commons in 1965: checking this with him, Hooson traced the sergeant Scott cited, and found that Scott had really been arrested in Chelsea in 1962. Chief Inspector Smith, as he was by then, promised to attend Byers' 'court' in the House of Lords.

Hooson, with more frankness than tactical cunning, informed Thorpe – who was disturbed to discover Hooson's direct line to the police. Hooson recalls him saying that he would himself contact either the Home Secretary or the Commissioner of Police 'to ask the police to co-operate fully in the matter of our inquiry.' Just how swiftly Thorpe made contact is not clear: but what is clear is that on the following day, when they arrived to see Byers, their co-operation was something less than full. Inspector Smith was accompanied by a Chief Superintendent Perkins who was there (he later explained) to ensure Smith 'did not get himself into any trouble'.

They added almost nothing to what Hooson had already discovered. The existence of Scott's highly-detailed 1962 statement at Chelsea police station was not disclosed. Nor was anything said about the 'Bunnies' letters, which were in police hands – and which were to give poor Byers such a jolt when he saw them in the press five years later. Scott, it was agreed, seemed to be a 'nut-case'. There wasn't anything they wanted to prosecute Thorpe for. Nor Scott. Given the fact that Bessell had gone to earth in America, the

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Liberal inquiry seemed likely to fizzle out. (Scott, grilled by Byers, had fled in high emotion.)

The police were not, of course, required to engage in a witch-hunt against Thorpe. But having agreed to aid a group of MPs who were testing the veracity of a private citizen against that of an important politician, they had no business allowing that inquiry to be misled by *suppressio veri* – which is what happened. Their position was admittedly difficult, but they allowed themselves to be used in branding the weaker party as a 'nut case'.

BUT HOOSON, although discouraged by Byers, continued in pursuit of Bessell. And Scott, prompted by his mother, went to the police on 10 June and asked for his letters back. He had no luck: instead the police took another long statement from him and sent it 'upstairs'.

Thorpe clearly realised that the letters remained a danger: and he set out, audaciously, to have their existence officially denied. Having spoken privately to Maudling, he was empowered to make a direct approach to Sir John Waldron, presiding sleepily over a police-force whose remarkable state of corruption was yet to be exposed by the Robert Mark regime. On 16 June, just a week after Scott's new statement, Waldron minuted carefully the two questions that the Liberal leader wanted answered. Was there any record of an incident in 1964 or 1965 when Scott had supposedly come with a gun to the House of Commons? Were there any police psychiatric reports on Scott that Thorpe might see?

The first question, as Thorpe must have known, would attract a negative as surely as if he had asked whether Scott had been in the Great Train Robbery. The second was an unashamed plea for dirt. Waldron's minute made no mention of letters.

He telephoned a reply to Thorpe: there was no incident, and no psychiatric report.

The way was now clear for Thorpe to finish off Hooson, who had put his feelings into a note to Richard Wainwright, chairman of the party executive:

> I . . . expressed my dissatisfaction at our failure to get to the bottom of the matter, but told him I had extracted a promise from Thorpe . . . that if the party were seriously embarrassed by anything Scott published, he would resign the leadership.

Wainwright, though excluded from the inquiry, knew from a previous incident at the Commons that embarrassment might well arise from homosexual claims against Thorpe. The state of play was that if anything were to make Scott's wild remarks into a documented allegation, then Thorpe would have to step down. But Thorpe now set out to ensure that Scott would never be able to bring this about – his method being to have the imprimatur of the State applied to the 'conclusion' Byers had adopted.

'My dear Reggie', he wrote to Maudling on 13 July, 'I am very grateful to you for your interest and help in the case of Scott.

> As far as Byers, Steel and myself are concerned, the matter is closed. To the intense annoyance of all three of us Hooson, whose motives are not entirely selfless, is intent to go on rummaging around . . Frank (Byers) feels that the only way to convince him that he is really muckraking to no purpose is to set out the facts in a confidential letter from me to Frank . . . which Hooson should be shown.
>
> The enclosed is the letter . . . In short, I would like to append to my private letter to Frank a short note from you and one from Waldron, or one from you on behalf of both, saying that its contents are a fair summary.
>
> No more is required. Needless to say it would remain in Frank's files and be treated as totally confidential. I am sorry to be a bother. But the first lesson in politics is that no-one can be as disloyal as your own colleagues!
>
> Yours ever, Jeremy.

Attached was the draft of the 'fair summary' which Thorpe proposed to send to Byers. Its apparently innocuous opening sought to establish the idea that Thorpe had consulted the Home Secretary in order to promote a vigorous police investigation:

> The allegations made were in my view so serious that the police are really the only proper people to investigate . . . this did not seem to be a job which one ought to ask one's colleagues to carry out, nor is it one which it is their job to discharge.
>
> The Home Secretary subsequently told me that Scott had visited the police, that frankly they did not really know why he had gone to see them: that there was nothing which called for action on their part arising out of this whole affair . . .

This was a specific divergence from the truth, for the police knew perfectly well that Scott had gone to see them to get his letters back, and that the action called for, in law, was their return. But neither Maudling nor Waldron baulked at Thorpe's account. Growing bolder, the next section dealt with the question Thorpe had asked Waldron about the non-existent 'gun incident' of 1964 or 1965 and Scott's notional arrest at the Commons

> Upon which occasion, he (Scott) alleges, incriminating letters written by me to him were taken from him by the police.

Neatly, the genuine incident of the taking of the letters, which occurred at Scott's real arrest in 1962, was tacked onto a carefully-sustained non-event. Sir John, wrote Thorpe, had telephoned to say there was no record of the gun incident, and that therefore 'one might safely conclude it had never happened.' Thus Waldron was lured subtly towards endorsing a denial that the 'Bunnies' correspondence existed at all, after which Thorpe brought the 'fair summary' to a suitably dismissive close:

> As far as I am concerned, apart from the possibility of periodic and neurotic eruptions, this tiresome matter is closed. I know this is your (Byers') view. I conclude that both our colleagues think likewise.

THE COUP did not come off in its full glory. Maudling sent the letter to Waldron, but the Commissioner jibbed at the crucial sentence about the letters, which, cunningly constructed though it was (no, letters had not been taken from Scott in 1965) constituted an excellent example of Kipling's 'truthful, well-weighed answer/That tells the blacker lie.' Waldron returned the letter: Maudling sent it blithely back for Thorpe to have another try.

Thorpe produced a new draft, omitting the sentence about the letters. This time, it came back from Waldron with cautious, but satisfactory approval. 'Dear Jeremy' wrote Maudling, in a covering note to be displayed to Byers:

> Thank you for showing me your letter to Frank Byers. I have shown it to the Commissioner . . . neither of us sees any reason to disagree.

It was, for the moment, enough – even though Thorpe had not quite managed to extract the crucial phrase which would have made it deeply awkward for the police to re-open the matter. Thorpe sent the approved letter off to Byers, who sent it on as intended to the outmanoeuvred Hooson. 'I had not the slightest idea', said Hooson later

> that there had been any consultations between the Home Secretary, the Police Commissioner . . . and Thorpe as to the contents of the letter which Thorpe should write to Byers . . . There was no formal determination by the Committee (of Inquiry). The matter simply lapsed.

The whole exercise was based upon the proposition – flawlessly understood by Thorpe – that under the rules of the game as played a well-connected politician could deploy in his own cause a selective access to official records which could not be checked by others. The result was a pretence which successfully endured for several years, and which was trundled out repeatedly in defence of Thorpe's position: 'Colonel' Byers becoming at one point sufficiently confused to assert publicly that *he* had ordered a full police inquiry into Scott's allegations.

And the whole conspiratorial manoeuvre would have remained quite unknown had not Thorpe himself – apparently – become so enamoured of his own creation as to inform

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his Old Bailey defence counsel that he had invited Waldron and Maudling to investigate allegations against him and 'once for all let him know if there was any truth or anything further to be investigated' (the words are those of George Carman QC).

The Crown's reaction exposed the bones, at least, of the story. Next day Peter Taylor QC, prosecuting, read out an agreed statement of admissions:

> It is admitted that no request, whether oral or in writing, was made by Mr Thorpe either to the Home Secretary Reginald Maudling, or to the Metropolitan Police, as to the truth of Norman Scott's allegations, save as to the two points raised in the note of 17 June 1971 (*the gun incident, and the request for psychiatric record*).

Taylor's final speech was deferential in tone, but it nonetheless managed to spell out the issues bluntly. 'It gives you an insight into the way Mr Thorpe works – I am sorry to put it this way – trying to fix the record.'

Mr Carman, for the defence, made a valiant attempt to present the whole business as one in which his client was trying to straighten-out the record. But he became more interesting when, trying to deal with Mr Thorpe's motives, he argued, in effect, that the behaviour involved was roughly what one had to expect from a senior politician. It might be thought that the motive was to silence Hooson, a rival for the leadership.

> Perfectly true. Quite clearly, that is one of his motives, because he is a political animal. Let's not disguise it from ourselves; politics, like many other walks of life, has a great deal of competition in it. You have got to preserve your own interest, and there is nothing wrong about that.

Mr Carman again defended his client's actions in terms of political necessity when the matter of Nadir Dinshaw's evidence came up. Dinshaw had innocently transmitted £20,000 from 'Union Jack' Hayward through his Jersey bank account to Thorpe's friend David Holmes. He gave uncontested evidence that Thorpe had tried to make him lie about this transaction, and threatened him when he refused to do so. Mr Thorpe's lawyers were at pains to point out – with support from Dinshaw – that Thorpe had no motive in exerting this pressure beyond a desire to protect his political reputation. The jury, presumably, were expected to react with a worldly smile.

ONCE THE LIBERALS had been – secretly – fixed, Thorpe's reputation appeared tolerably secure. Later, Thorpe was to claim that he had been hounded by a prurient press, and the claim was given substance by his friend Harold Wilson. Thorpe, said Wilson, had been the victim of

> a classical innuendo against an MP, and in my view against democracy as a whole.

But the truth of the matter is that in the years between 1971 and 1976 the newspapers specifically rejected several opportunities to print a story which – so far as they could see – constituted nothing more than wild allegations about a politician's private life.

- In 1971, Gordon Winter took Scott's 'dossier' and a comprehensive series of tape-recordings to *The People*.
- In May 1972, at the inquest on Gwen Parry-Jones, Scott alleged, under privilege, that he had had a homosexual relationship with Thorpe. Local correspondents sent the story to all the national papers, any of which could have printed it without fear of libel proceedings.
- In November 1974 workmen brought to the *Sunday Mirror* several documents which they had found while redecorating Peter Bessell's abandoned office. Included was a long detailed letter sent by Scott to Thorpe's mother. Having paid the men £200, the *Mirror* handed the letter over to Thorpe.

None of these contacts led to any publicity. And nothing at all was printed until after the shooting of Scott's dog in October 1975. After that point the newspapers, followed by the police, found themselves inquiring into a mystery, and then into a conspiracy – one which, it eventually transpired, was intended only to 'frighten' Scott, and which did not include Thorpe in its machinations. Entangled in the laws of libel and contempt of court, and inhibited by Thorpe's implicit denial of the 'tendencies' which he later admitted, they found it quite impossible to make their intentions clear to their readers. Thorpe showed a lively appreciation of the tactical value of the libel laws: at a party for Westminster lobby correspondents, given just before Scott's second, and this time much-reported court outburst, Thorpe assured a distinguished reporter that privilege was not absolute, and that he would sue if anything Scott said about him were to be published.

The game was played out to the last card. For as long as possible, Thorpe pretended that nothing like the 'Bunnies' letters could possibly exist: then, when it was clearly inevitable that Scott would recover possession and publish, Thorpe tried to pre-empt them with his own disclosure through the *Sunday Times*. (There was a last, forlorn attempt to get the paper to edit out the words 'I miss you'.) Conceivably, Thorpe might have survived if he had faced Scott from the first as the Duke of Wellington faced Harriet Wilson – 'publish and be dammed' – but he chose to pretend, and the collapse of his pretence was fatal.

FACTS Haven't you ever wished you were better informed?

Gerald Kaufman writes: We miss *The Times*, or so we are told. Not for its Tory politics, which are more than adequately purveyed by a range of national and provincial journals. Nor for its news coverage, which the *Daily Telegraph* can outmatch any weekday. But because it is our only newspaper of record and that is why we need it back so much.

A record of our times must of course be accurate, and it happens that we now have an up-to-date opportunity of testing the accuracy of *The Times*. Only two months after the general election, *The Times Guide to the House of Commons* has reached the bookstalls. So indispensable is this publication thought to be that (it is said) the Speaker of the House of Commons could not wait to get his hands on a copy: 339 pages provide what the dust cover claims to be a 'unique and detailed guide'. As a reputed standard work of reference it is unquestionably unique – in providing so much inaccurate and misleading information.

Technically, it is a shocking piece of work, littered with many dozens of misprints. The book's compilers find themselves unable to spell 'grammer' (*sic*, p. 31) and the very subject of the Guide comes out variously as 'Parliamentray' and 'Parlimentary'. It is, however, its more than 70 serious errors of fact which most crucially undermine the book's reliability.

Pages 246 and 247 give one set of figures for electorates and votes cast in February and October 1974; page 248 gives completely different figures for these same two elections. A section on marginal seats tells us that the Liberals lost Truro, where in fact they multiplied their majority nineteen times. A list (incomplete in any case) of trade union sponsored MPs in the new Parliament includes Eddie Loyden, who was defeated in Garston.

The Guide invents by-elections that never took place in Barry, Mid Bedfordshire, Bromsgrove and Hammersmith North, while failing to document a genuine by-election in Walsall North. Even more enterprisingly, it fabricates a non-existent by-election in a non-existent constituency, Hounslow West. Among defeated candidates, Corin Redgrave (WRP) is said to have been defeated at Jarrow instead of Lambeth Central.

Percentage swings are hopelessly miscalculated in such constituencies as Banbury and Honiton; Leicester South is said to have swung to the Conservatives instead of to Labour, while Houghton-le-Spring has a swing figure but no indication of which party benefited.

When dealing with individual candidates, the Guide often loses its grip completely. Ken Eastham, the new Labour MP for Blackley, has his name printed wrongly (Easton) in three different sections. Other candidates, possibly more fortunate, are offered a choice of surnames on the very same page: Mr Ground or Group (Con, Feltham and Heston), Miss Holmstedt or Homstedt (Lib, Keighley), Mr Wakeman or Wakeham (Con, Maldon) Mr Patten or Pattern (Con, Oxford), Mr Tripper or Trippier (Con, Rossendale). Tom Hooson and Stan Crowther are christened firmly and respectively as Timothy and Joseph. And on a page that would surely meet with Gore Vidal's approval, the Conservative candidate for Kirkdale is listed as Mr Myra Fitzsimmons.

At the age of only five Bernard Silver ('born October 1973') did extraordinarily well in gaining 8,880 votes for the Liberals in Bristol West. He was however outdone by Mrs Ray Michie (Lib, Argyll) and Tim Smith (Con, Ashfield), both born in 1974. Particularly prodigious is the case of Mr Smith, a Mozart of politics who won the Ashfield by-election at the age of two-and-a-half in April 1977. Ian Campbell (Lab, Dunbartonshire West) cannot rival this group of precocity, but while only in his mid-teens ('born 1962') held the remarkably responsible position of 'chairman of the all-party Scotch whisky industry group'.

Reginald Eyre, appointed Under-Secretary for Trade in May 1929, is clearly Parliament's front-bench veteran. But Nicholas Ridley, designated as a front-bench spokesman in 1955, four years before his election to Parliament in 1959, demonstrates notable skill in career-building. Information about Ministerial appointments is incomplete and inaccurate in the cases of Geoffrey Finsberg, Neil Carmichael, Charles Morris, Sir Michael Havers, Jerry Wiggin and Frank Judd. Edward Heath is also seriously misrepresented both as to the date on which he resumed the leadership in Opposition in 1974 and on the number of ballots it took to remove him from that leadership in 1975.

No fewer than 498 candidates are allotted no biographical information at all – including 45 Liberals, two Labour candidates, one Conservative and 135 Independent and fringe party candidates. It would be particularly interesting, for example, to know something about C. Nottingham, whose 2,042 Democratic Labour votes enabled the Tories to gain Brigg and Scunthorpe by 486 votes. At least one MP (Ron Brown, Lab, Leith) is depicted with someone else's photograph. The fold-out map at the end shows Inverness as a Labour, not Liberal, constituency.

All this, and more, bearing the authoritative inprimatur of *The Times* can be purchased for £12.50. Is the reputation for authority of that imprimatur really warranted?

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IRAN
Stuart Holland

An eye-witness account of Iran's dilemma

Iran's power vacuum

HISTORICAL ANALOGIES are seductive. This is but the 14th century by the Islamic calendar. At about the same period in Christian history, the papacy attempted a form of theocracy similar to that now envisaged in Iran by Islam. Innocent the Third, shortly before suffering the humiliation and trauma of finding himself seized by soldiers, proclaimed that the spiritual power of the church had the right to subjugate the secular power of his time if the latter failed to 'do good'.

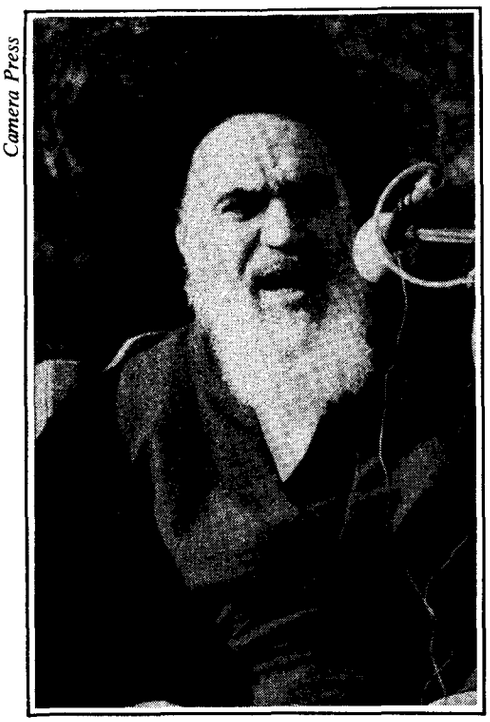
Similarly, the Revolutionary Council in Iran, whose very composition is more secretive than even a college of cardinals, has assumed secular power in a manner unparalleled in recent Iranian history. Islam, in many ways more catholic and more broad than the Catholic Church itself, has assumed a greater political hegemony than anything attempted or achieved in several centuries. Its pretensions are universal. Its support is visible and real at certain levels, including the Imam committees of adolescents, flaunting automatic weapons at street corners and factory gates, and taking summary justice into their own hands.

Islam, for the present, has achieved a political hegemony based in part on popular consent, but it's arguable that it lacks state power or the capacity to resolve the contradictions in Iranian society. The Imam committees themselves, so powerfully in evidence on the streets, are as little subject to specific rule from the Ayatollahs as were the representatives on mission to the committees of Public Safety and General Security during the French Revolution. The position of the Ayatollahs is as insecure as that of key revolutionaries in France in 1792 or 1793. They may not literally lose their heads, but it is quite possible that they will lose control of their 'revolution'.

This is hardly because of the organised strength of the Left. Nor is it because democratic or indigenous capitalist forces are strong in Iran. Nor is it even because the imperialism of East and West of which the Islamic forces protest is likely to be able to establish a new hegemony over Iran, through direct pressure, in the near future. Quite simply, it is not clear that what recently happened in Iran amounts in any genuine sense to a revolution.

FOR INSTANCE, it has already become conventional wisdom that the seeds of the Shah's destruction were sown in the very phenomenon which he appears to have thought would save him – the phenomenal increase in oil prices which made his regime one of the world's all-time big spenders and himself the playboy of the Eastern world. Emphasis has been laid on the insecurity of the ruling elite in Iran under the Shah – the constituency of technicians and the professional middle class on which he should have been able to rely for support. But, substantially because of the dictatorship, Iran lacked a ruling class or a technocracy. As their economic power grew under the boom years of squandered oil revenues, the very elite on which the Shah's political power could have been based withdrew their passive support. The Shah's rule deprived them of a political role.

In one sense, the Shah had intuitively



Camera Press

grasped the necessary conditions for the rise of a national bourgeoisie: the separation of powers between secular and religious forces, and the eclipse of the latter to marginal, if not exiled, roles. But such secularisation – evidenced by not only night clubs and liquor, but also cinema and greater sexual freedom – seems to have alienated a greater share of the total population than it freed. The peasantry which swarmed to the cities, and especially Tehran, over a decade of frenetic industrialisation, was neither placed to benefit from such freedoms on any major scale, nor able to identify with the values which they represented. While many of them may have been pulled to the towns by the incentive of higher earnings, most seem to have been pushed off the farm by the perverse effects of a land reform which left them worse off than under private ownership.

In effect, the Shah deprived himself of the support of those two groups which, in combination, have provided most fascist or reactionary regimes with their most reliable support: the middle class and the peasantry. But if the Ayatollahs can inherit at least passive support from one such class – the peasants – they have little to offer the other save abstinence, sobriety, and a set of values to which they are thoroughly unaccustomed. Even those peasant workers who were unhappy in the cities of the Shah's unbrave new world appear to have mixed feelings about responding to the new ethic of 'return to the land'. While disguised unemployment may be low in Iranian agriculture, and while agricultural production is arguably underemployed following the exodus to the towns in recent years, the end of the boom in industry and construction offers most young Iranians little but sweat, toil and tedium in the rural areas of subsistence farming.

REVOLUTIONARY RHETORIC certainly cannot fill the gap indefinitely. Moreover, that rhetoric is now being used very powerfully against some of those that helped make the revolution possible in the first place. This includes both the main guerrilla groups of the Mojahidin and the Fedayin. The former was previously Islamic in orientation.

Both are in key respects Marxist and both are more powerful, in real terms, than the Communist Tudeh Party of Iran. In a country where electoral votes are a matter of history and a parliament is as yet non-existent, strength is measured by the number of demonstrators on the streets. While the Tudeh Party has trouble in raising its thousands, neither the Mojahidin nor the Fedayin has difficulty in gaining their tens of thousands of supporters, as witnessed by the mobilisation of some 50,000 demonstrators a fortnight ago in Tehran against the imprisonment of one of the Mojahidin's main activists on an implausible charge of being a Soviet spy (based, it seems, on the unlikely grounds that he was bear-hugged by Brezhnev on a past visit to Moscow). These groups are very much the tip of a wider range of localised resistance to the Shah, with sizeable representation in individual provinces.

The new regime also faces trouble if it blocks real progress on the demands of those industrial workers who were forbidden basic trade union rights under the Pahlavi regime. Their direct action – not least in cutting off oil production in Abadan – contributed substantially to the Shah's downfall. After decades of repression, trades unions are virtually non-existent in Iran. But the denigration and imprisonment of trades unionists, after the expectations raised by the success of industrial action in recent months, has created a major area of tension and opposition. Industrial workers, in particular, have seen their real earnings massively reduced by an inflation reckoned to be rising by some 30 to 35 per cent a year, while unemployment in real terms is estimated by leading economists to have risen to between a quarter and a third of the total working population.

AT THE SAME TIME, the current Islamic government gains no support from the one group which can claim a comparable moral force of its own: that association of political groups in the National Democratic Front which owes its own legitimacy to the record of Mossadeq, as pioneer not only of democratic rights and procedures in Iran, but also of the philosophy which – through OPEC – reversed the dominance of Western powers over the main asset of the Middle East and Iran. Including not only members of the Bar Association and Writers' Association, but also direct collaborators and disciples of Mossadeq himself, such a grouping of mainly middle class and aristocratic professionals represents a considerable focus of discontent and criticism of the Islamic republic and its pretensions.

The present regime has no positive policy in two main areas – the domestic economy and the nationalities question. Khomeini fulminates against foreign imperialism. Yet apart from his injunctions against alcohol, resulting in Coca and Pepsi Cola dominating virtually any restaurant table, there has been a basic

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inconsistency. For several months Prime Minister Bazargan has – vainly – invited foreign capital and capitalists to return to Iran. The nationalisation of banking and insurance some weeks ago, and the nationalisation of the remaining national and international big business last week, did not represent a coherent 'Islamic' formula for management of the economy, but rather a classic state capitalist reaction to crisis in both the financial and industrial sectors of the economy.

Yet even within this area there is a major contradiction. For the Islamic republic favoured in government rhetoric and the street banners and wall writing of many towns has no effective state power. The political hegemony which, to date, is real enough in terms of rule by Ayatollahs and Imam committees, is not translated through the administrative and executive machine itself. If ever there were a case for 'smashing' the state apparatus in classic leninist style, the network of inefficient clientelism and corruption weaved by the Shah is it. Yet the current regime appears anxious to establish central control on an Islamic model without the rigour of even the pseudo-democratic centralism which survived in the Soviet Union. Nominally Islam is an international force which transcends national boundaries. Yet the dominant faction of Islam in Iran is the Shi'ite sect, led by the biggest Shi'ite of them all, the Ayatollah Khomeini. Rather than admit a form of Islam which transcends nationalities by embracing them, the current regime is vigorously opposed to relative autonomy for the significant Iranian minorities which in language and culture constitute nearly half of the total population.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN next? Thanks to the Shah's paranoic pretensions, Iran nominally musters the largest and most powerfully equipped army in the Middle East – questionable in quality but comparable in sheer weight with any, including Israel's. Last week, following months of independent and summary trials and executions of SAVAK torturers and army personnel by revolutionary committees, the Khomeini government significantly declared a general amnesty for the army. But this may not be enough to ensure that the Ayatollah avoids the fate, in due course, presaged by Innocent III. After President Carter's withdrawal of support for the Shah and the army chief of staff's declaration of his neutrality in Iranian politics, the army not only returned to barracks, but in many cases abandoned them. Yet enough of the army remains for its continued neutral role to be questionable. Only this week its former counter-intelligence chief was reported to have set up a 'counter-revolutionary' force near the Iraq border. Certainly the former guerrillas of the Feyadin and Mojahidin have taken the precaution of removing their arsenals from Tehran in anticipation that their headquarters may soon be approached by troops sent to disarm them.

In addition, there are divisions not only within Islamic forces in Iran, but between the Ayatollahs themselves. The Ayatollah Teleghani, second in real influence to Khomeini himself, and notably popular in the states of the North, has not only declared himself in favour of elections to a genuinely constituent assembly, but also asserted that priests who wish to play politics should forsake their vestments and play a directly political role. Implicitly, this represents a direct criticism of Khomeini and partly accounts for those banners which call on Teleghani himself to stand as a candidate for president of the Islamic Republic. Otherwise, Khomeini's concept of republicanism and a constitution is well represented by his declarations on the nature of the democratic assembly which he is prepared to tolerate: essentially one for which anyone will be free to stand provided he accepts the principles of an Islamic republic and is free from any foreign influence. In practice, this means the exclusion of not merely pro-Western candidates who would be unlikely to gain any significant mandate, but also democrats committed to Western models of pluralism, and Marxists smeared by association with the Soviet Union.

For the time being, Khomeini's writ is likely to both run and rule. In this sense, the recently unimagined appears practicable. Islam, so despised by the Shah, came to constitute the only safe and creditable alternative to the Pahlavi regime. With a divided Left, and repressed trades unions, it has achieved a dominance of Iranian politics which to its current supporters may well seem irreversible. But it has survivied to date and can only survive over the medium term by a combination of euphoria and repression. Over the longer term, its weaknesses should prove transparent.

FANTASY
A B Atkinson and Christopher Hitchens

The latest 'ideas' of Britain's Industry Secretary

Sir Keith wins the pools

JOYCE CARY ONCE came up with the phrase 'tumbril remark' to describe the inadvertent crassness of upper-crust observations on the poor. In their latest contribution to the theory of neo-conservatism*, Sir Keith Joseph and Jonathan Sumption have vastly improved on the original idea. Here is one of their typical *aperçus*:

> Envy is capable of serving the valuable social function of making the rich moderate their habits for fear of arousing it. It is because of the existence of envy that one does not drive Rolls-Royces through the slums of Naples.

There is the mentality of the book. Note, first, that the deadly sin itself is ascribed only to the poor. (Bear in mind that ostentatious millionaires do flourish in Naples, and that a wall was once built there to hide the slums.) Is it really the case that – assuming 'one' had a Rolls – it would be proper to flaunt it if fear of envy could be removed? On this logic, the action would be morally unimpeachable if the poor were so reduced by starvation, or so well policed, that they were unable to make a protest. Some countries have, of course, achieved this happy equilibrium.

Its extraordinary manners aside, the central contradiction of this very slight work is that it seeks to prove (a) that inequality is good for us and (b) that there is less of it these days anyway and therefore less need to worry. The two authors are never clear about whether they are celebrating inequality or apologising for it. A subordinate contradiction is that, while the authors try to show that equality is against human nature, they keep bewailing the fact that humanity persistently makes efforts to achieve it. They are blissfully unconscious of both these failings in their own text, and as a result their argument is methodologically unsound and statistically misleading.

The pages are clotted with fantasies and imaginary developments (such as 'the abrupt leftward lurch of the English middle class in the early 1970's). Joseph and Sumption are so concerned to show inequality as a matter of Fortune's wheel that they are reduced to repeated use of irrelevant cases like pools winners and Premium Bond bonanzas.

With similar casuistry, the pair attempt to show that the pursuit of equality is, as well as antithetical to human nature, a high road to ruin. They argue that it automatically leads to a stronger state and an eventually totalitarian system. Naturally, they do not believe that the word 'system' can be applied to a state where inequality has resulted from the beautiful and symmetrical operations of the market.

They therefore do not deal at all with the huge number and variety of tyrannical systems which have as their object the preservation of class inequality. Indeed, they don't regard the existence of such things as a problem at all. (So much is suggested by their Rolls-Royce analogy. You don't flaunt it because you want to hang onto it). But the notion of 'Egalitaria', the fictional state of uniformity and bureaucracy, troubles them so much that they will bend the figures to stave it off.

Their imaginatively-entitled chapter 'Lies, Damned Lies and Statistics' attempts to show again (a) that inequality is a diminishing thing and (b) that there are no reliable figures on the subject. In trying to prove that figures prove nothing, the privileged pair discredit their expensive education. No recent findings – such as those embodied in the published work of the Royal Commission on the Distribution of Income and Wealth (lately scrapped by Mrs Thatcher as if covering Sir Keith's scholarly tracks) – are acknowledged at all. The authors claim that we do not know the total of the national wealth, but they ignore the work of Professor Revell on national balance sheets, and the careful studies of personal wealth undertaken by the Central Statistical Office.

They get into even worse trouble when they try to peg wealth inequality to age difference. Not only do they confuse the adult and the total populations (a difference between 40m and 55m – not bad for a Minister of Industry) but they have clearly overlooked the detailed lifetime savings model which was constructed by E. Jones for the Royal Commission.

By the same token, they attempt to laugh off the wealth estimates based on estates as 'notoriously misleading' and so vulnerable to error that 'a single youthful millionaire could by accidentally walking over a cliff' render the results useless. Regrettable as such a contingency might be – especially if it were to take place by accident – it would show up only in

*_Equality_. Sir Keith Joseph and Jonathan Sumption. John Murray £4.95

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the third decimal place. The Joseph-Sumption claim, that the official statistics assume 24 million adults to own nothing at all, flatly ignores the estimates pioneered by the Royal Commission and now taken over by the Inland Revenue.

NOT CONTENT with leaving their opponents' case intact, our heroes have to make a hash of their own by trying to show that life in Britain has been one long redistribution over the last ten years and more. True, the share of the top one per cent fell in 1973–4, but this reflected a movement of stock exchange prices and was largely reversed by a rise in 1976. 1979 doesn't look like being a bad year either. As for the 'room at the bottom', the lowest decile of male workers made only marginal improvements in their earnings position between 1970 and 1976 and have fallen back since then.

Since our authors state their conviction that 'by any absolute standard there is very little poverty in Britain today' and since they 'have reached the conclusion that (extremes apart) there is no objection of principle to any proportion of the population owning any proportion of the wealth', presumaby these findings cause them scant difficulty. In any case, since they also believe that 'all Englishmen in the early years of this century had an equal opportunity of founding Morris Motors' we are left to presume that such remedy as might be necessary is to be found in our own hands.

Like most such apologists, the authors appear to believe that while inherited intelligence is very important, inherited wealth is not. One might almost suppose that, a few anomalies apart, there is equality of opportunity in Britain. Professor C. D. Harbury's work on the origins of large fortunes, which shows that inheritance is still very important, might as well not have been written for all the notice that Joseph and Sumption take of the evidence. This is hardly surprising from the standpoint of their own method since, as the quotation above makes plain, they only believe in 'absolute standards', when these can be applied to the poor. It would be very difficult to establish by what 'standard' poverty should be measured, since living standards are necessarily interdependent. This obvious consideration, involving some study of the way in which rising incomes in some areas *entail* falling incomes in others, does not detain the authors at all.

Conservatism has always rather prided itself on neither having nor needing a theory. For centuries, inequality was maintained by force and sanctified by religion. After the industrial revolution, straight coercion was replaced by the discipline of scarcity and, later, mass unemployment. There have always been attempts to justify inequality in principle – the most notorious effort being made by Samuel Smiles. Joseph and Sumption obviously realise that something more respectable is needed today. But they come nowhere near their target. They show no understanding of the egalitarian case; alleging for example that the Left is not much interested in the question of inherited wealth. So, finally, they have to fall back on the tired argument of 'human nature' and attempt, in the words of Condorcet, 'to render Nature herself an accomplice in the guilt of political inequality'.

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POLITICS
Phillip Whitehead

On Wednesday the PLP began to reform itself

The whips crack

THE PATRONAGE system at Westminster flourishes on a scale worthy of the unreformed House of Commons – or at least unworthy of a reformed one. Lack of internal democracy dispirits the Parliamentary Labour Party, and sours and frustrates it in its relationship with the electorate at large and with the National Executive and the mass party in the country. After Wednesday's meeting of the PLP there has emerged enough common ground between critics on the left and the right of the party to make it impossible for either to be played off against the other, though they have opposing objectives in terms of the PLP's relationship with the National Executive.

There is agreement in three main areas. The patronage powers of the whips have increased, are still increasing, and ought to be diminished. The remedy lies in election rather than selection, with supplementary powers of recommendation in the hands of the party's subject groups. The party meeting should be a decision-taking body with its own agenda and powers of scrutiny and ratification. Beyond that opinions differ, according to whether you want the PLP to be a subordinate part of a system of democratic centralism, or a more reflective and independent part of a pluralistic Labour movement.

At present the whips rule. They effectively determine where an MP has his desk, which committees he sits on, and where and when he travels. They choose the delegations to the Council of Europe, West European Union, and the North Atlantic Assembly, as well as other more exotic locations. A notorious malingerer may do well out of this, as the whips will find it easier to have him abroad and automatically 'paired' rather than explain his absence from the lobbies. In addition they choose the Labour members of both select and standing committees. Speaking on the second reading of a bill, or having a specialist knowledge of some particular topic, is no guarantee of selection. You may be lucky, you may not. The Committee of Selection, which has in its hands the crucial appointments to

the new Parliamentary select committees, has just been appointed. The ex-whips in its ranks appear to be in charge of vetting their respective party applications.

All this cries out for the remedy of election. The PLP should elect its own overseas delegations and its representatives on the Committee of Selection. That Committee should have before it the nominations of the party's own subject groups for both standing committees on bills and select committees shadowing the Whitehall ministries. These backbench committees, which at the moment dutifully meet to hear Labour ministers or shadow ministers, and perhaps establish a tenuous connection with NEC sub-committees working in the same area, should also have the right to nominate from their own ranks those who occasionally speak from the front benches for the Party. It is also common ground between the left and right in the party that all principal spokesmen should be elected by the PLP, which is easy to achieve in opposition; harder in government.

The Benn-Heffer proposals, put to the PLP on Wednesday, skate over the difficulty insouciantly. They say: 'These arrangements shall remain in force when a Labour Government is in office.' In the past, Labour leaders winning an election have done what Attlee did in 1945, when he headed for the Palace in his car, leaving behind him the 1933 Conference resolution that the PLP should elect three advisers to help him in his cabinet making: they have built around the foundations of the elected shadow cabinet which fought the election. This has not precluded bringing in outsiders like Frank Cousins, or bringing back returning MPs – as may be the case with Shirley Williams next time. If the PLP continued to vote by secret ballot there would be no way in which it could be assembled to choose a cabinet. It should however have the power of ratifying them, at the first full Party meeting, and re-electing them in subsequent years. What would happen to the principle of collective responsibility, if cabinet ministers had been elected rather than appointed? Could an elected minister be sacked? In practice the removal of a rebellious minister, who sought the palm without the dust, would be likely to be endorsed by the PLP, which is a shrewd judge of men and motives when it is allowed to be. Benn and Heffer, however, go on to advocate open rather than secret ballots, a coercive device that is as discredited as the patronage it is intended to attack.

MPs have just returned from a bruising encounter with their constituents. They know how little they were able to influence the events which led to Labour's defeat. That is why the impetus for reform at Westminster was expressed so strongly this week. But they also know that they are unlikely to win back public support if they are seen merely as the frightened fuglemen of an Annual Conference willing to change every institution in the Labour Party save only itself, or the sacrificial victims of a re-selection process aimed at eliminating not so much the idle and incompetent as the ideologically suspect. A more democratic PLP would gain legitimacy as one of the first Labour Party institutions to reform itself.

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The Quango as referee

Does Britain's race relations industry make life better or worse for the ethnic minorities? ANNA COOTE and MIKE PHILLIPS investigate, and find an unequal contest being fought in the presence of a complaisant referee.

ONE QUANGO Margaret Thatcher will not be abolishing is the Commission for Racial Equality. If the Tories do get around to axeing any more of those ill-defined creatures, they will go for the ones which present some kind of political threat – and the CRE does nothing of the kind. It maintains an impression of official concern, but there is little evidence that it has done anything to alter the status quo by making blacks better off than they were. In the first two years of the CRE's life, it has drawn rather more criticism from independent black organisations than from quango-bashers on the right.

Though it bears a new title, which suggests the official goal is no longer just good race relations, but actual equality between black and white, the CRE inherits an old tradition. The pattern of government response to non-white immigrants was so firmly set in its mould by the mid-1970s that no other kind of organisation could have been invented.

Race relations in Britain began as a species of neo-colonial welfare, for which the precedents had been the colonial experience itself, and the experience of coping with foreign troops on British soil. As a result, the 1950s spawned a myriad of liaison committees, friendship councils, consultative committees, Anglo-Caribbean cricket matches, and inter-racial tea parties.

The immigrants were then mainly West Indian; they came from a colonial culture with which many of the tea party sponsors would be familiar, so it was easy to imagine their being assimilated eventually, as the Jews and the Irish had been before. To some of the West Indians who had previously served in the British armed forces, the tea parties and liaison committees were a familiar if ludicrous expression of goodwill; but to other immigrants they were legendary and puzzling manifestations. The committees were set up on the initiative of the local Council for Social Services or Council of Churches, and their stated goal was to help the newcomers familiarise themselves with British customs and attitudes. The sort of advice that was passed out straightfaced was to remember to buy a workmate a drink if he bought you one, and not to talk or laugh too loudly – and it was all aimed at introducing immigrants unobtrusively to British society. When the phrase 'racial harmony' was used, it tended to be a catch-all phrase like the brotherhood of man, and it meant what the speaker wanted it to mean, usually that there was no overt racial conflict of the kind taking place in the American south during the 1950s. Race relations in Britain were regarded as a local affair and were so 'non-political' that it was unacceptable even to use words like 'race' or 'colour'. Members of the pro-immigrant lobby had difficulty finding ways to describe black people and resorted to such euphemisms as 'overseas friends' and 'Commonwealth visitors'.

The shape of the early race laws and subsequent black disillusionment with white liberal initiatives can be explained by the nature of that early pro-immigrant lobby. The immigrants themselves had neither relatives (like the Irish), nor religious fellows (like the Jews) who might act as lobbyists and protectors. Instead, there were ex-colonials who had been missionaries, teachers or administrators overseas, who were proud of the imperial tradition and who saw it as their duty to help their colonial brethren. And there were survivors of groups such as the Movement for Colonial Freedom, who felt guilt or anger over Britain's record of exploitation. A self-selected and disunite bunch, they lacked any ties of blood or belief which would make immigrants accept their goodwill without suspicion.

After the race riots of 1958, the scepticism with which immigrants regarded the pro-immigrant lobby shaded into hostility: these people, it appeared, were both vocal and influential, but could do nothing useful to improve the average immigrant's life. The lobbyists, for their part, were all the more determined to keep race out of the debate, in case 'it stirred things up'. Local authorities, on both left and right, were so reluctant to acknowledge racial tensions that by 1964 there were still only four of them prepared to support the local liaison committees which were the forerunners of the modern Community Relations Councils.

THE GOVERNMENT had begun, however, to make laws restricting immigration: the first Act was passed in 1961. And it soon became apparent that the imperial tradition, world opinion, Commonwealth reactions, and the continuing threat of racial conflict in the streets, required some reciprocal move towards guaranteeing the rights of immigrants in Britain. Immigrant opinion was changing, too. No longer accepting the tea-party view of themselves, blacks began to establish political parties and organisations which were strongly influenced by the American Civil Rights Movement, and which analysed their position in terms of racial discrimination. In December 1964 both Dr Martin Luther King and Malcolm X had visited Britain. The latter inspired black self-defence groups and other militant organisations which were later to develop into the Black Power movement. But the first widespread expression of the new awareness was the Campaign Against Racial Discrimination (CARD), which was inspired by Dr King and formally inaugurated in 1965 under the chairmanship of Dr David Pitt. CARD was an umbrella organisation, which involved both blacks and whites and was supported by two of the main immigrant organisations of the time, the West Indian Standing Conference (WISC) and the National Federation of Pakistani Associations. Its aims, directly opposing the tea-party ideology, included 'the elimination of all racial discrimination against coloured people', and 'opposition to all forms of discrimination on the entry of Commonwealth citizens into the UK'. Its legal sub-committee got involved in drafting the first Race Relations Bill (with which the Labour government was hoping to sugar the pill of tighter immigration controls) and there was a general hope among CARD supporters that the Bill would put muscle on to the campaign for racial equality. They witnessed instead the first successful exercise by government in containing black assertiveness.

For Parliament to legislate on race relations in 1965 meant a radical departure from the British tradition of reform. In the past it had always been assumed that public opinion moved and inspired social legislation and, indeed, it was public opinion which justified the first immigration laws; but a law to promote racial harmony could claim no such support. (Had there been a consensus, there would have been no call to legislate for harmony!) Instead, there was a growing fear of conflict and a sense of optimism that this could be ironed out by the welfare state. But while the government departed from one tradition, it clung firmly to another, more recent, one – in opting to strengthen the existing liaison committees, with their specific and narrow network of patrons. The 1965 Act set up the National Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants (NCCI), with government funds and instructions to 'build up a comprehensive body of doctrine' which could be 'flexibly applied to a variety of local situations'. The NCCI was empowered to pass on funds to local liaison committees, provided they met three conditions: they had to be joint projects of immigrants and the 'host community'; they had to have the full backing of local authorities; and they had to be non-sectarian and non-political. In other words, the tea parties were now supported by government money and prestige. Integration was still the goal, but the concept of 'racial harmony' had slightly altered: no longer merely the absence of overt strife, it now incorporated the idea that immigrants should somehow be treated 'fairly'. (It did not yet involve the prohibition of discriminatory acts.)

It came as a bitter disappointment to many CARD supporters that the 1965 Act classified race discrimination not as a criminal offence, but as a civil misdemeanour, limited to certain specified public places: and that it charged the new Race Relations Board with 'conciliation' rather than prosecution. As a further blow, several prominent individuals, including Dr Pitt, left CARD after joining the more respectable NCCI. Immigrants accused CARD leaders of time-serving and betrayal, and the immigrant organisations withdrew their affiliation early in 1966. 'CARD has lost its direction' said Jeff Crawford, secretary of the WISC at the time, 'and become dominated by whites. We wanted a strong body that would speak out for us, but it has become soft and middle-class, working behind the scenes.'

Each subsequent attempt by government to deal with the problem of race relations was to be accompanied by a similar sense of betrayal on the part of the immigrant community. The 1968 Race Relations Act extended the anti-discrimination provisions in the law, but preserved the role of the Race Relations Board as an agent of conciliation and persuasion. As *The Times* put it:

> The Conciliation Committees would provide an assurance of realism as well as of a moral conscience. It is true that the coloured population needs

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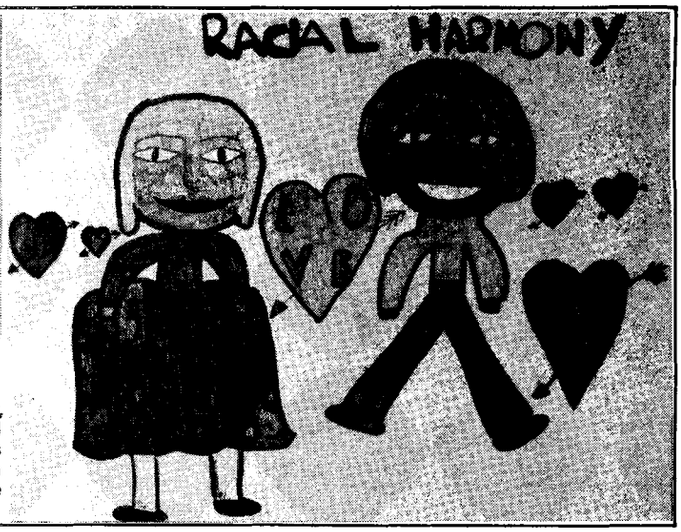

Above, **David Lane. Right, the CRE promotes 'racial harmony': one entry to its poster competition, which invited children to depict the idea.**

> to be reassured as well, but with the public opinion in its present mood the first essential is to prove that the law will be applied in a practical fashion.

So race was 'moral' rather than 'political' and need for 'reassurance' was paramount.

When the Community Relations Commission was established in the same year, it inherited the uneasy position of the NCCI, balanced halfway between government responsibility and private enterprise in race relations, with instructions to 'encourage the establishment of . . . harmonious community relations'. Its brief assumed that the interests involved were easily reconcilable, while both whites and blacks tended to be certain they were not. The former saw the Commission as an unwarranted privilege extended to blacks and the latter saw it as an expensive talking shop, too weak to affect the real circumstances of their lives. The government was by now committed to framing statutes which made racial equality conditional upon achieving a consensus (and this was what was meant by 'harmonious') but the immigrant community, whose consent was crucial, was notionally committed to a policy of 'no harmony without equality'. Even leaving aside the attitudes of the white majority, the possibilities for conflict and alienation were enormous.

IT BECAME increasingly obvious in the next half-decade that a more sophisticated formula would have to be found – both to meet the demands of black people and to quell the growth of racism. There was now a wider understanding of how deep discrimination could run – and it was clear that the Race Relations Board could not deal with institutionalised racism of the kind found in schools, in the civil service and in the media. New employment laws which made use of industrial tribunals shed unflattering light on the Board's conciliation procedure – as did comparisons with statutory provisions in the United States. The National Front was stepping up its activities and blacks were turning more and more towards their own self-help network, rather than to the official race relations machinery: it looked unlikely that the Community Relations Commission would conjure racial harmony out of thin air.

Strong legislation was needed – not least because the 1975 Sex Discrimination Act left an embarrassing gap between the legal rights of women and those of the ethnic minorities. But the arrival of the Commission for Racial Equality in June 1977 was to be a very different kind of political event from the establishment of the Equal Opportunities Commission eighteen months earlier. The latter was chiefly a response to demands from women that they should have equal rights in law; the former was less a response to specific demands from the ethnic minorities than an attempt to deal with the growing expectation that blood would be shed if some new initiative were not taken soon.

By combining the Board and the Commission into a single body, the 1976 Race Relations Act did more than just rationalise the old structure: it drew together the 'positive' (anti-discrimination) and 'negative' (harmonising) aspects of statutory race relations – and institutionalised the view that the two were organically linked. The CRE could thereby ensure that neither the prescriptive nature of anti-discrimination legislation, nor pressure from immigrants, would predominate over the tea-party attempts to create a 'harmonious' consensus.

The new CRE chairman, David Lane, symbolised perfectly the gentlemanly conservatism of the venture. An old Etonian with a double-first in Classics from Trinity College Cambridge, he had been Tory MP for Cambridge since 1967. But he was not just *any* old Etonian Tory: he had been a minister at the Home Office from 1972-4 and he was committed to cutting down the number of immigrants to Britain. On 5 July 1976, in the month he was appointed chairman, he told the House of Commons that Britain could set an example to the world in race relations:

> but this will depend more than anything else on reassuring the white majority that immigration is being strictly controlled at a manageably low level by a determined Government.

He pointed out that immigration had risen from 30,000 under the Tories to 50,000 under Labour, 'and as an annual rate I believe that is too high'. And he suggested, among other things, that the government should 'strengthen further the special intelligence unit which was set up a few years ago'. (This was the unit which became notorious for harassing black communities on the pretext of rooting out illegal immigrants.)

From 1975-76, Lane was an adviser (on salary negotiations) to the Association of Chief Police Officers and during a debate on the Police Bill in 1975 he paid tribute in the Commons to 'efforts made by the police to bridge the gap' between themselves and the West Indian community:

> I believe that we are now justified in saying to the leaders of the community: 'Now it is up to you to move forward to meet the genuine efforts of the police to bridge the gap and end this suspicion.'

Lane, whom most people agree is an awfully nice man, views race relations in the classic manner of the tea party lobbyist. Racial harmony is just around the corner – or, as he put it last month on the CRE's second birthday: 'I hope it will not be too long before I and my colleagues have worked ourselves out of a job'. Fortunately, it can be achieved without encroaching on white privilege:

> Let me make it clear – the Race Relations Act is not just for the benefit of black people; equal rights are for all. The Act is not designed to confer privileges on ethnic minorities but to ensure them elementary justice; not to give them special advantages but to help remove the special disadvantages from which many of them suffer.

THE CONSTRUCTION of the CRE was dogged with suspicion, bitterness and no small measure of racial tension. Lane had a free hand to decide who should run the planning unit and he chose Tom Connolly, the chief officer of the Race Relations Board (whom he designated chief executive of the CRE). From the start, staff of the Community Relations Commission were worried that the Board, with its legalistic, elitist image and its preponderance of whites, would try to 'take over' the old Commission, with its less distinct character, its more wide-ranging activity and its more variegated racial mix. Industrial relations were severely strained. And there were accusations of racialism as some blacks began to suspect that all the better jobs were going to whites. Of the five most senior jobs on the CRE (chairman, chief executive and three directors) four were offered first to white men. Two prominent employees of the Community Relations Commission, Aaron Haynes, a West Indian and Surendra Kumar, an Asian, brought proceedings for unfair dismissal when they were not offered jobs as principal officers – and their success was followed shortly by Tom Connolly's resignation.

Within a month of the CRE opening its doors for business, David Lane received a letter from the ASTMS group to which 116 members of his staff belonged. This expressed the 'firmly held view' that some senior management staff were 'not genuinely committed to equality of opportunity and . . . constantly use(d) their position and influence to frustrate and undermine the work of black staff'. In particular, it attacked the formal investigations division, which consisted largely of personnel from the Race Relations Board.

> They conceive of themselves as a white power base, a sort of elite within the Commission and race relations, and the only source of ideas.

The letter was later withdrawn, chiefly on the ground that it did not follow the proper grievance procedure. But the ASTMS group would not concede that its complaints had been unfounded.

The Commissioners, who were destined to be the policy-makers of the CRE, had no part in the planning stages. By comparison with the chairman and senior staff, they appear quite progressive, although they could hardly be described as hot-headed radicals. Among the more determined of the 'progressives' are Bill Keys, General Secretary of SOGAT, Pranlal Sheth, one of the three deputy chairmen and a barrister who works as company secretary for Abbey Life, and Bill Morris, a Birmingham-based trade union official – and they are

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usually supported by a small majority of votes at Commission meetings. What political initiatives there are tend to emanate from the Commissioners, who often find themselves pitching their weight against the caution and conservatism of the chairman, or struggling to get policies implemented by a weak and inadequately resourced executive body.

MOST OF THE PUBLICITY the CRE has achieved so far has been for its formal investigations. It has launched more than 35 – and that looks good beside the EOC's ignominious score of five. But the way in which they are being conducted is attracting increasing criticism. Peter Sanders, who runs the investigations department, believes it is vital to maintain the co-operation of people being investigated: 'We try to reassure them before we start that it is not a hostile act, we are all in it together'. Lengthy negotiations precede most formal investigations – and are conducted in as friendly a manner as possible – while the organisation in question tries to persuade the CRE not to proceed. Massey Ferguson-Perkins Ltd is said to have been so anxious to avoid investigation that it claimed Britain's export drive would be damaged if the CRE went ahead. It was, it protested, busy fixing an important contract with Pakistan and this might be endangered if the company were known to be under suspicion of race discrimination. Preliminary talks with Massey Ferguson had begun in January 1978, after several complaints were received that there were virtually no Asians or West Indians among its apprentices. The company pleaded, threatened, and promised to co-operate fully in an *informal* exercise. Both David Lane and Peter Sanders were won over, and agreed to drop the formalities. It was not until some weeks later that word got back to the Commissioners, after a local trade union official said there had been a 'cover up' at Massey Ferguson and the CRE had dropped the formal investigation for 'political' reasons. Only on the insistence of the Commissioners was the investigation finally launched in September 1977.

Just two of the 35 investigations have been completed so far and no more than six are expected to be finished before the end of 1979; some have already been going for nearly two years. Much of the delay is caused by the CRE's determination to stay on cosy terms with the people it is investigating – which can draw out the proceedings with superfluous conversation and artificial sympathy. By contrast, investigators working for the Ombudsman are under instructions to have nothing to do with the people they are investigating, beyond taking formal statements and collecting relevant documents. It says a lot about the CRE's attitude to race relations law that it can regard a search for evidence that the law has been breached as a *friendly* exercise.

Peter Sanders' division is now gingerly embarking on the informal preliminaries to a formal investigation of the Home Office's immigration procedures (in the wake of the virginity test scandal). Sanders and Lane were evidently reluctant to do so – and both told the NEW STATESMAN they would rather the Home Office itself launched a public inquiry. But the Home Office did not, and the Commissioners insisted on going ahead. For the CRE to investigate its own paymaster will be a real test of the quango system. It will be interesting to see how long it takes.

Cover picture on the CRE's Brick Lane report showing 3,000 local people outside Bethnal Green Police Station, protesting at the police failure to curtail National Front attacks.

So little has been achieved overall that there is only one area where the CRE's performance can be measured in concrete terms – and that is the help it gives to individuals complaining of race discrimination. The failure rate for complaints under the 1976 Act is phenomenal: out of the 603 individual complaints on which tribunals had reached a decision by 13 June this year, only 61 succeeded. However, of the successful cases, 58 had full representation provided by the CRE (compared with 41 of the unsuccessful cases). The equation is simple: representation by the CRE can spell the difference between victory and defeat for individuals who believe they are victims of race discrimination. Yet the CRE has given such a low priority to this work – allocating only 14 staff, less than half the number assigned to formal investigations – as to arouse suspicion that the planners never intended it to make too much of an impact. More than half the formal requests for legal assistance have to be turned away.

Goolan Meeran, who heads the complaints section has attempted (against considerable odds) to give at least some help to everyone who needs it. He also wants the 1976 Act amended. Both he and Pranlal Sheth maintain that it is impossible as the law stands for many individuals to prove race discrimination, and that the burden of proof should be shifted to the employer. But this raises the ticklish question of how the CRE should behave when it believes current law inhibits its statutory duty to 'promote racial equality'. How hard should it try to get the law changed? David Lane not only maintains that the CRE 'is not a campaigning body', but also prefers *not* to amend the 1976 Act: 'I am not persuaded that it is time to change the law. We need another year or so to see what happens'.

Lane is also opposed to abolishing the notorious 'sus' law, on the ground that if it were abolished, the police would find some other means of harassing young blacks. On the same logical basis the Race Relations Act should never have been passed, since whites have found other means of race discrimination not covered by the Act. Curiously, Lane expressed this view to the NEW STATESMAN just one week after the Commissioners had agreed that the 'sus' law should be scrapped.

BEYOND THE FIELD of law enforcement, the CRE's record has been dismal. Only one major piece of research has been begun, completed and published by the CRE. That is the report on racial strife in the East End, *Brick Lane and Beyond,* which serves best as an illustration of the CRE's failure to respond to crises in race relations. The research was prompted by escalating attacks on the Bengali community by the National Front: it was supposed to analyse the causes of the problems and recommend ways of solving it. What emerged was a series of unattributed quotes from local people, cobbled together with a minimum of bland comment, a handful of statistics and an aimless historical account of the East End, from the arrival of the Huguenots to the Second World War. Criticism of the police is confined to the anonymous comments of local interviewees. The introduction fails to mention the National Front but talks instead of 'a deterioration in race relations'. The eloquent picture on the front cover (see left) is not identified anywhere in the report. No attempt is made to link the statistical information (on housing, education and employment) with the growing racial violence. And – most significant of all – a number of alterations were made to the first draft of the report, in which one can detect the gentlemanly tact of the chairman. It was thought wise, for example, to omit passages which set the Brick Lane events in the context of growing violence and distrust of the police in other parts of the country; which referred to young Bengalis, organising for self-defence; and which accused the police of protecting the National Front (see below, p. 53).

The report was roundly attacked by people living in the Brick Lane area, as well as by Commissioners. Bill Keys wrote to the CRE's chief executive, Peter Tucker:

> The ethnic minorities were expecting a positive report – they did not get it. We have a crisis of confidence in the CRE's ability to deal with an appalling situation. I have spent many hours in Tower Hamlets in the last year or so and I must say that the report in no way conveyed to me the serious situation that exists. I implore you to tell me why we are so frightened to face up to it.

The CRE was no more successful in responding to the recent violence in Southall. Having failed to persuade the Home Office to launch a public inquiry, the very least it might have done was to launch an investigation of its own. But the CRE has remained conspicuously inactive and last week was acutely embarrassed when an internal report accusing the police of 'very considerable' violence was leaked to the press.

Brick Lane and Southall signal a wider failure of the CRE – and that is its apparent inability to make helpful contacts at a local level. One of its divisions, known as PACS (Public and Community Services) has assumed the task of liaising with local authorities. It has selected for its target 22 inner city authorities and is now proceeding ceremoniously through the list, approaching each town hall in the same formalised manner. First, two or three officers from PACS, together with a representative of the local Community Relations Council, meet senior officials from the authority, to expound the principles of the CRE and exchange views. Next, each relevant department of the authority (housing, education, health and social services) receives a visit from a PACS 'specialist', who delivers a more detailed sales pitch and suggests ways in which equality might be achieved. Finally there is a second general meeting to evaluate progress to date. When all meetings at all 22 town halls are over – and it will take a long time, since the PACS division

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has only 11 staff above Executive Officer level – the 'results' will be published in a single report. This kind of approach was abandoned back in 1970 by the Community Relations Commission, when it was found to elicit no more than lip service from local authorities. But perhaps it is too early to judge whether the CRE will be prevented by its apparent surfeit of dignity and shortage of imagination from influencing the inner cities.

SOME OF THE MOST scathing criticism of this liaison exercise has come from representatives of local Community Relations Councils (CRCs) – who may feel that they could do the job better themselves, or that they are not being properly consulted. But then it seems to be a rare occasion when anyone from the CRCs has anything very positive to say about the Commission for Racial Equality.

The relationship between the Commission and the local CRCs is a complex and painful one. The CRCs have trouble enough with their own identity: heirs to the tradition of the liaison committees, they have a statutory duty to be 'non-sectarian and non-political', and to gain 'the support of a wide variety of local organisations'. Almost any local group can affiliate, and since it is rare to find agreement between so many different interests, the CRCs tend either to be stultified by eternal compromise, or to be spurred into action by one particular ethnic group or political faction, which has found that the only way to get it moving is to ignore the letter of the law and dominate the proceedings. It has never been clear exactly what the CRCs are supposed to do: are they extra resources for rundown areas? A welfare service to immigrants? Or simply a pool into which complaints can be dropped? The scope for confusion is very nearly unlimited.

The CRCs are a curious form of sub-quango, with their own special brand of quasi-autonomy. They get money from the Commission for Racial Equality and money from the local authorities, but either source can be cut off if displeasure is incurred. They are held together loosely by the National Association of Community Relations Councils, which, with a staff of two, attempts to give advice, encourage common policies and represent the Councils' interests. However, most of the Community Relations Officers are employed indirectly by the CRE, so the lines of authority are tangled and indistinct. It is generally acknowledged that there *is* a problem, and that it is the job of the Commission for Racial Equality to sort it out; but the Commission has so far been unable to invent a more satisfactory structure.

The chairman of one East London CRC commented: 'Ninety-nine per cent of the CRCs are disappointed with the Commission. The level of ability among senior officials is disappointing and the quality of advice is poor. They have been unable to set up any training schemes for senior management of the CRCs and they have failed to provide the sort of informed, detailed guidelines we need if we are going to put pressure on the local authority to set up an effective equality programme.' The CRCs, he said, were unable to exert any influence over the Commission, since it held the purse strings and was entirely unaccountable.

The CRCs are the nearest thing the Commission has to a 'grass-roots' connection, and it could only benefit both sides by being more responsive to their needs. However, the quality of the CRCs' own work is enormously varied and they, too, are often regarded with suspicion and resentment by black organisations. Their history and structure, like those of the Commission, are more likely than not to inhibit them from working in the best interests of the ethnic minorities. Typically, the black chairman of the Westminster Community Relations Council pointed out that the CRCs had never been known to take part in any of the intense campaigns of the local black communities – on housing, rents, education or the 'sus' law: 'The trouble is that the CRCs don't take up political positions and I think they should. But when they do, other people take up other political positions which make it impossible for them to achieve anything. So you can't win either way.'

WHILE WE WERE RESEARCHING this article, we were warned by some of the severest critics of the Commission for Racial Equality that this was not the time to publicise their discontent – when the Commission's very existence was threatened (as they thought) by a new Tory government. But all these warnings were from white people: the blacks we spoke to displayed no such tendency to close ranks in the face of an outside enemy. Instead, they believed without exception that the CRE could only be of use if it entirely altered its policy. 'David Lane sees the CRE as a PR operation,' said Joe Abrams, chairman of the Council of Citizens of Tower Hamlets. 'When the CRE goes to talk to the Home Office, they don't consult the black organisations first. They consult the moderates, not the people they see as "troublemakers"; but these are the people who are in dire need. The CRE should see themselves as representing the ethnic minorities.'

Of course, if the CRE did that, it would have to abandon altogether the tea-party principle on which the white establishment has staked so much financially as well as philosophically. And it seems unlikely that it will ever make such a change while the views of both major political parties remain so many miles apart from those of the people they are ostensibly trying to help. 'Look, you've got two sides, an oppressor and an oppressed and all the oppressed can do is make sure they are organised sufficiently', Sunil Sinha, a member of the Southall Youth Movement, explained:

> This is where the Commission for Racial Equality, or any kind of statutory body which is trying to play a mediating game between two sides, really needs a rethink. If you've got two boxers and they're punching the hell out of each other you don't sit there and say 'Are we going to have a stronger referee?' The game that's being played is boxing, right. And the idea is to kick the shit out of each other. All we can do is make sure we don't get the shit kicked out of us. What they do about racial tensions is really their problem.

As the self-help movement spreads among Asian and West Indian communities, the people involved are bound to become increasingly at odds with the CRE. Many of them receive substantial grants from the CRE, but their efforts to help themselves do not sit easily with its efforts to impose a 'harmonious' consensus. What the ethnic minorities need is better housing, better jobs and better education and training. These things are not in unlimited supply, and white people will not willingly give up what small advantages they have: so the efforts of blacks to achieve genuine equality can only be non-harmonious.

Defenders of the CRE would argue that there is an important job to be done in changing the *attitudes* of whites so that they become more tolerant of black people's efforts to better themselves. However, it remains a pious expectation that if various racial groups are educated in the same schools and taught about each others' 'culture' (multi-racial education), they will grow to adulthood with changed attitudes. Most blacks in Britain are very much aware that the real education of children about the nature of their world comes from their observations about what happens to people when they leave school: and white school leavers are several times more likely to get jobs than black school leavers. There is no evidence that generations of educational togetherness has substantially eroded white prejudice. What counts is the way the white majority perceives its own interests, *not* the level of its understanding of black people's 'culture'.

IF RACIAL HARMONY is a phoney concept and changing attitudes an unrewarding venture, there are really only two things the CRE can usefully do. First, it can concentrate its efforts on law enforcement – by directly assisting individuals with complaints; by training large numbers of trade unionists, Community Relations Officers and members of black self-help groups to present complaints effectively to industrial tribunals; and by extracting the non-hostile tea-party element from its formal investigations and behaving more like police officers investigating a breach of the law. Second, it can continue to dispense funds – but more of them, since it now probably wastes half of its £6 million annual budget on the pursuit of harmony – to pressure groups and self-help organisations which can fight for racial equality far more effectively than the CRE ever will because they have no obligation to appear impartial. The Community Relations Councils, for their part, should abandon their harmonising role and turn themselves into law centres and resource centres, providing printing facilities, libraries and so forth, for all members of the ethnic minorities who want to use them. Anything else would be at best superfluous and at worst a serious impediment to racial equality.

These passages among others, were cut from the Brick Lane Report:

● In many quarters black people, especially the young, were complaining about police harassment and brutality. In Brent, a rally was organised 'against police brutality' after it was alleged that seven black girls were brutally beaten up by police and later charged with assault. This apparent worsening relationship between the police and young blacks – the majority of West Indian origin – spilled over into the police handling of the Notting Hill Carnival and resulted in the worst violence ever witnessed in this country between the police and black people.

The following quotes from Bengalis were also cut:

'Yes, there are quite a few groups amongst us. But that is not a sign of weakness, as people commonly imagine. It goes on to demonstrate that Bengali youth are getting organised.'

'There is no doubt that the police are protecting the National Front. They seem to have strange notions about freedom. They protect the Front's freedom to abuse, insult and even attack but not our freedom to oppose these.'

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London Diary

☐ My reliable sources close to the Prime Minister tell me that she has been smitten by Wilsonian Smelteritis. This nasty disease takes its name from Harold Wilson's mid-1960s obsession with smelters, which were duly put up all over the country to the profound distress of every living thing within miles. Thatcher caught it during a recent visit to France where she was attacked by a howling pack of public relations men from the nuclear industry. Suddenly she saw a Britain without miners and power workers, where all power is produced by gleaming nuclear reactors, guarded by special police and shrouded in the Official Secrets Act.

Her fever has been fanned by Sir Arnold Weinstock, whose General Electric Company has the licence to build light water nuclear reactors similar to the one which broke down recently at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Monday 2 July was a great one for Sir Arnold. His first boost came from William Waldegrave, the Brightest Young Man in Britain, who has just been elected MP for Bristol West and secretary to the Tory MPs energy committee. In a feature article in the *Guardian* advocating more and more nuclear reactors, the wizard Waldegrave admitted that he worked 'part time' for GEC. Come, come, Mr Waldegrave. Don't be shy. You worked in Sir Arnold's private office. I especially liked Waldegrave's brilliant explanation of Harrisburg. What happened on Three Mile Island, he wrote, shows how tolerant nuclear equipment is. There is no chance whatever of these reactors going wrong, but when they do, it's amazing how tolerant they are about it.

On the same day as Waldegrave's article, Richard Lindley of BBC Panorama introduced a programme on nuclear reactors. He was merciless when interviewing poor old Sir Francis Tombs (sic) of the Electricity Council about gas-cooled reactors. But when it came to Sir Arnold and the water-cooled reactors, Lindley the Lion became Lindley the Lamb. He purred and grovelled so much that even Weinstock looked embarrassed.

☐ I offer to take Lord Bernstein, socialist millionaire and chairman of Granada Television, to Coventry at my expense to meet Ann Coffey. For the last five years Ann has worked for a bingo club. I know that will interest Lord Bernstein because in his 1976 statement to Granada shareholders he said: 'Bingo clubs are acknowledged by many people working closely with local social services to have an important role in people's lives.' They are also acknowledged by many people working closely with money to play an important role in the lives of Granada shareholders. Last year, Granada's profits from bingo halls rose by 49 per cent.

Well, Ann doesn't have her job any more and that's why she wants to see Lord Bernstein. She worked for the Club One in Coventry, and led a successful strike in 1976 and 1977 for recognition of the union of the workers choice: the T&GWU.

Earlier this year the workers at Club One were told they were to be taken over by Granada. A Granada spokesman arrived, spoke to the workers, and assured them their jobs were safe. They were even fitted out for new uniforms. Then someone mentioned that they were organised in the T&GWU. Suddenly, the plans were changed. Granada insisted on getting the club 'with vacant possession', (that is, without any workers in it). The old management, Orr Enterprises, persuaded the majority of workers to accept redundancy pay, and closed the place without even waiting the statutory 90 days. Ann and 35 others didn't want redundancy money. They want their jobs.

Ann tells me that she and her 35 friends are thinking of visiting Lord Bernstein in his home – with all their children. Oh dear, what a fuss there would be then, but I am afraid I can do nothing to prevent it. Unless Lord Bernstein takes up my generous offer.

☐ A letter in the *Spectator* mourns the death of Mr Anthony Chenevix-Trench, 'a great headmaster', and yearns for the return of *The Times* obituary column to pay proper tribute. This diary is no substitute for a *Times* obituary of course but I would hate to miss the opportunity of paying my respects to Mr Trench who was my housemaster at Shrewsbury School 25 years ago.

Trench made his name as a great innovator, especially in corporal punishment. He would select certain younger boys for special tuition in Greek Prose, in which he was a recognised scholar. Less than three mistakes earned a bar of chocolate; more than three a beating. But Trench was no ordinary flogger. He would offer his culprit an alternative: four strokes with the cane, which hurt; or six with the strap, with trousers down, which didn't. Sensible boys always chose the strap, despite the humiliation, and Trench, quite unable to control his glee, led the way to an upstairs room, which he locked, before hauling down the miscreant's trousers, lying him face down on a couch and lashing out with a belt. He achieved the rare distinction of being hated and despised by every boy who came in contact with him, and was therefore an obvious choice to be the youngest ever headmaster of Bradfield, and then of Eton.

At Eton he made the mistake of whipping the heirs of Earls as though they were run-of-the-mill manufacturers' sons at Shrewsbury or Bradfield. One sensitive young Viscount limped home and bared his tattered bum to his outraged father. Trench was sacked. He was appointed headmaster of Fettes.

☐ I nominate as best book-barrow in London the stall at the foot of Berwick Street market in Soho. Howe's budget has pushed prices up from 35p to 40p a book, but there are still lots of good bargains, and a complete turnover at least once a week. On Friday last I picked up an interesting volume entitled *Where Stands Socialism Today?* – a collection of lectures given to the Fabian Society in 1932, hardly a year after Labour's worst defeat in history. There are essays by Hugh Dalton and A. L. Rowse (yes, it is he) and one In Praise of Guy Fawkes by Bernard Shaw who had some nice things to say about Sir Oswald Mosley. The most interesting is Parliamentary Institutions by Sir Stafford Cripps, who had just discovered Left-wing socialism.

Cripps' lecture is obsessed with the details of the government machinery necessary to usher in what he calls 'the socialist state'. With clinical determination, he lists all the Orders in Council, delegated legislation and Tariff Commissions which must be set up to stave off any counter-attack by capitalism.

There is a curious similarity between Cripps then and Tony Benn today – and not simply in both men's tendency to preach. During the last Tory government, the Labour Left applied itself, with some success, to changing Labour's policies. On their own, the policies proved useless in the face of economic crisis. So now the Left concentrates on the more important question: how can these policies be put into effect? But I detect in the Benncamp signs of a Crippsian fallacy: 'change the rules of the Party or of Parliament, and the rich will fall into line.' They will not, of course. And unless Tony Benn takes his campaign out of the committee rooms and to the masses, he will end up as Stafford Cripps did – an Iron Chancellor calling for restraint and hoping for socialism only in heaven.

☐ I brush aside flimsy resistance to bragging about my children to record the remarkable fact that Matthew Foot, 12, can now say all 92 verses of Shelley's *Mask of Anarchy* without consulting the text. This has taken nine months at the rate of two verses a week. I have tried to learn it too, but his nimble memory has left me far behind.

It has cost me £15, which is further proof of the decline in the value of money. In 1948, my grandfather, Isaac Foot, who was richer than I am, paid me 2/6d for learning and reciting Tennyson's *Revenge*. Then, sensing he was in a buyer's market, he had the cheek to offer (and have accepted) *five shillings for 76 verses of Macaulay's Horatius!* A Treasury spokesman assures me that my rates are higher.

The only lines I remember from *The Revenge* are from the dying speech of Sir Richard Grenville.

> I have fought for Queen and Faith
> Like a valiant man and true.
> I have only done my duty
> As a man is bound to do.
> With a joyful spirit, I,
> Sir Richard Grenville, die.

And he fell upon the decks, as I recall, and he died. Which served him right, the pompous old jingo.

There is, however, an ineluctable law of progress. For Matthew has now learned:

> For with pomp to meet him came
> Clothed with arms like blood and flame
> The hired murderers, who did sing
> I am God and Law and King.

And 91 others just as moderate.

Paul Foot

This England

Prizes: £3 book token for first entry, £2 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

☐ Some Conservatives welcomed the cuts. Mr Gerald Tyler of West Yorkshire said: 'There is nothing that concentrates the mind like a bit of poverty.' – *Guardian* (Bill Hilbourne)

☐ Prof. Fremlin said: 'I told the Windscale inquiry two years ago that it is safer and more pleasant to eat a radioactive fish than a tin of luncheon meat, and I say this again.' – *Daily Telegraph* (Carl Dyer)

☐ The Duke of Edinburgh took his first ride in a taxi today. His reaction: 'It's a bit noisy, isn't it?' – *Evening Standard* (Larry Grant)

Arthur Marshall and Roger Woddis have unavoidably been held over until next week.

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LETTERS to the EDITOR

Colonel Blimp in Ulster

Sir, Kingsley Amis is at pains to point out to Christopher Hitchens (NS 22 June) how ignorant and foolish he would have to be to confuse Great Britain with the United Kingdom. He tells Mr Hitchens that the Province of Ulster is as much a part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland as Piccadilly Circus. In doing so, he shows an ignorance all too typical of current media 'Colonel Blimps'. Mr Amis should know that the Province of Ulster consists of nine counties of Ireland, three of which, counties Cavan, Donegal and Monaghan, are in the Republic of Ireland.

These counties were reluctantly conceded to the Irish Free State in 1920 by Ulster Unionists, one of whom, Lord Cushandun, wrote the following in his account of the Ulster Unionist Council meeting in March 1920:

> To separate themselves from fellow loyalists in Monaghan, Cavan and Donegal, was hateful to every delegate from the other six counties, and it was heart-rending to be compelled to resist another moving appeal by so valued a friend as Lord Farnham. But the inexorable index of statistics demonstrated that, although unionists were in a majority when geographical Ulster was considered as a unit, yet the distribution of population made it certain that a separate Parliament for the whole Province would have had a precarious existence, while its administration of purely nationalist districts would mean unending conflict.
>
> It was therefore decided that a proposal for extending the area should be made by the Ulster members.

GEORGE SHEERIN

20 Perham Road
London W14

Ghosts of Nuremberg

Sir, When I sat in the visitors' gallery at the Nuremberg Trials towards the end of 1945 and looked at Julius Streicher, the notorious Jew-baiter, sitting in the dock, I thought that anti-semitic cartoons like those displayed in his journal *Der Stürmer* would never again make their appearance. I was shocked to look at the cover of the NS of 15 June 1979 and see a caricature of Kissinger, undoubtedly recognisable as that gentleman, but distorted beyond all moderation in the true Streicher tradition. In my book *Racketeers of Hatred* I reproduced just that type of caricature to illustrate the Franconian Führer's demagogic intention to generate hatred of Jews in general.

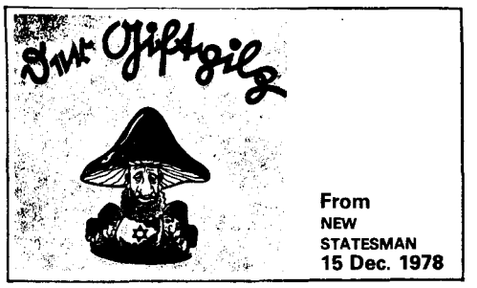
I am sure that my favourite weekly had no such aim when choosing to publish that cartoon. But anyone familiar with the *Stürmer* will without the slightest shred of doubt be as horrified as I am to see the evil ghost of the butcher of Nuremberg reappear in England's green and pleasant land.

LOUIS BONDY

Members' Lobby
County Hall, London SE1

A number of readers have complained about the Kissinger cover, and some of them in terms which, unlike Mr Bondy's, attack our motives. The first thing to make clear is that the editorial staff of the NS are not unfamiliar with the classic example of anti-semitic drawings. We used some, for instance, to illustrate Reuben Ainsztein's major article on Soviet anti-semitism (15 December 1978), and a swift comparison will show that the genre isn't in fact very much like Law and Fluck's woodcut of Kissinger. Their work depicts, quire unmistakably, a particular man whom they wish to attack. In doing so, they distort his features beyond all moderation: just as Gerald Scarfe distorted Nixon's features beyond all moderation, and just as Ralph Steadman distorts Mrs Thatcher immoderately. It is difficult to see how cartoonists are to work otherwise, and difficult, surely, to believe that Law and Fluck should have 'Aryanised' Kissinger.

The image unquestionably shocks – but that may be because, in the democratic West, we are aware that the Jewish moral tradition has been one of our few



sources of political leaders able to transcend the idea that means, however ferocious, are capable of being justified by ends. It is startling to find a Jew – or anyway, a man of Jewish origins – as an exemplar of that grisly doctrine. Nothing in our account of Dr Kissinger's behaviour is calculated to suggest that Jews in general share his characteristics.

We won the cup

Sir, In seeking to denigrate the *Nottingham Evening Post* (NS 15 June) Mr Denis MacShane states that we had to rely on filched sports reports from the national press and the Press Association when Nottingham Forest won the European Cup and the League Cup. In fact we flew a reporting and photographic team to and from Munich for the European Cup final, and the morining after the match, i.e. 14 hours after the end of the game, produced a four-page broadsheet supplement with colour to wrap around all nine editions of the paper and add over 15,000 copies to the sale. We also flew journalists to earlier away rounds at Zurich and Cologne. As for the League Cup, we had staff men at the Wembley final and produced suitable editions to mark the occasion.

Experience has proved that journalists do not have to be members of the NUJ to do outstanding work for a newspaper.

W. W. SNAITH
Editor

Nottingham Evening Post
Forman Street, Nottingham

Facts in the West Bank

Sir, I agree with Ian Black (Letters 29 June) that 'facts are facts even in the West Bank', and I am grateful to him for conceding that I was right when I pointed out that two young Palestinians in Halhoul were, in fact, killed and not merely 'shot at' for it was in order to correct this error that I wrote. Regarding Mr Black's contention that I was 'wrong on both counts' when I wrote that the car in question 'contained armed settlers from Kiryat Arba who opend fire on the students', and 'A soldier who was attacked shot into the crowd', and the two Palestinians 'were both killed', because, he maintained, 'some shots were fired by a man travelling in a taxi from Beersheba to Jerusalem', and 'the bullets found in the bodies of the deceased were not of a calibre issued to soldiers', is surely an instance of the pot calling the kettle black.

Mr Black's suspicions that the circumstances I described were a figment of my imagination are groundless because, in reply to his question about 'who told me' about them, I would refer him to a report in the Israeli Labour Party daily newspaper, *Davar* (16 March), under the heading: 'A young man and a young woman were killed, shot by soldiers in Halhoul', in which Danny Rubinstein wrote: 'Hundreds of students gathered yesterday in the main street of Halhoul, blocked the road and hit an Israeli private car passing there. The men in the car were from Kiryat Arga and they were armed. They opened fire. One soldier who was attacked shot into the crowd. Nazri Hassan al-Anani, 24 years old, and Raya as-Shalada, 16 years old, were killed by the shots. Another youngster was hit in the leg.'

Now, an enquiry has revealed that one of the Palestinians was shot 'by an Israeli soldier and the other by a civilian whose car had been pelted with stones . . . A soldier has confessed to the shooting, but claimed that he acted in self-defence'. (Eric Silver, *Guardian* 4 July.)

Instead of quibbling about who might or might not have fired the fatal shots, those who are perturbed about the current situation in the West Bank should realise that the most disturbing and significant factor is that the killings took place at all, in a country under military occupation where a Palestinian convicted solely on the evidence of his own confession (for the last few months, Israeli newspapers have been full of allegations that these confessions are extracted under torture) of *possession* of arms receives a prison sentence of twenty years. On the other hand, Israeli soldiers recently found guilty of murdering Arabs have been sentenced to two or three years' imprisonment and even allowed home at week-ends (see Israeli newspaper reports and also the *Guardian* 4 and 5 July); and armed Israeli civilians are at liberty to roam the occupied territories provoking, intimidating and terrorising the Palestinian inhabitants (according to Israeli newspaper reports, Jewish settlers even break into Palestinian homes and attack the occupants).

MARION WOOLFSON

35 Camden Mews
London NW1

Mr Hill makes it plain

Sir, Duncan Campbell's review of a book called *Demystifying Social Statistics*, in your issue dated 8 June 1979, referred to the Radical Statistics Group as 'an offshoot of the Royal Statistical Society'. I should like to make it plain that this Society has no connection with the Group beyond the fact that some individuals are members of both.

I. D. HILL
Honorary Secretary

Royal Statistical Society
25 Enford Street
London W1

The chancellor's fedora

Sir, After reading James Fenton's review of Brian Finney's biography of Christopher Isherwood (NS 18 May), I got the chancellor's hat out of the hall cupboard, put it on, and went into the garden to write this letter. I was moved to do so by Mr Finney's reference, quoted and apparently swallowed whole by Mr Fenton, to 'Brüning's death' in 1932. If they believe this, the belief is a limitation in the author of a book about, among other things, Isherwood's (and Brüning's) Berlin, and in the book's reviewer.

Conclusive evidence that Heinrich Brüning survived his political demise is provided not only by the reference books (which record his death in 1970) but also by the chancellor's hat. This was purchased by me at a jumble sale in Norwich, Vermont, where Brüning was then living in retirement, in 1968. It is a soft brown fedora, size 7¼, bearing on the hatband the trademark of Man's Hats, Inc., Baltimore, and with a 'Superfine' lining by Knox of New York which displays the firm's crest and motto, *moveo et proficio*. (Food for thought there for the wearer, a politician who in his time had moved but failed to make headway.)

There is green braid around the crown of the hat, a touch that would have appealed to the émigré, and this was originally accompanied by an orange feather which disappeared a few years ago. As this suggests, the chancellor's hat is not a museum-piece. It continues to be worn. Like its former owner, it is a survivor.

E. C. BEER

Kingston
Ontario

Due to a mistake by a picture agency, the picture of 'Sir William Ryland' in last week's Post Office story was not, in fact, that gentleman. Also, thanks to faulty transmission, the profits of the telecommunications division were given as £3.5 million instead of £350 million.

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

John Arden

Rug-Headed Irish Kerns and British Poets

Jim Callaghan being heckled at a televised Labour Party meeting during the recent general election:

> Q: What about the torture in Ireland?
> A: When I hear about people being tortured by our troops, I wonder that anyone has the effrontery to come here tonight when four policemen have just been slaughtered and make a comment like that – you should go and hang your head in shame!

The same week Dr Conor Cruise O'Brien, *ex-cathedra* in the *Observer*, had denounced Irish-orientated British political hecklers as the civil 'Prong' of an Irish-directed terror-engine (the military arm of which was the IRA), and specially recommended them to the vigilance of the security forces.

These two alleged contributions to serious political debate were in fact something beyond well-worn tricks of electoral expediency – they should be seen in the total historical context of the prolonged (and, in sum, successful) attempt by our rulers, with the assistance of resident Irishmen, to represent the British control of Ireland as a legitimate ideological cause for national sympathy and support.

It did not begin like this. The original moves by medieval English monarchs to assert their lordship of Ireland were seen by all concerned – both invaders and invaded – as unexceptional examples of blunt feudal land-grabbing – the sort of thing any leader would indulge in if he could: the sort of thing any property-owner would resist if he could: and (despite some half-sincere papal interference on behalf of Henry II) there was nothing ideological or morally imperative about the business at all. Gaelic clan-culture was indeed *supposed* to be suppressed for the greater efficacy of the process: but the religion of the Irish presented no problem – their barbarous but Catholic devotions were in fact strongly admired, rather as some westerners today admire the exotic sanctity of Indian ashrams or the lamas of old Tibet. Ireland, a land of mysticism and gurus, is evoked by English poets of the 14th century as a salutary reminder to their more materialist readers:

> I am of Ireland
> And of the holy land
> Of Ireland.
> Good sir, pray I thee
> For of saint charity
> Come and dance with me
> In Ireland. . . .

Yet somehow the continuously violent dispute over the lordship of Ireland which has raged ever since with hardly a breathing-space – and now threatens not only civilised discourse during our democratic periods of choice, but also (by way of the Prevention of Terrorism Act, the deployment of the SAS, the censorship and manipulation of the news media, the abrogation of jury-trials in the affected districts, the brutalities of military and police interrogation, etc., etc.) our entire historic structure of civil rights and public liberty – has become so intensely 'ideological' as to resemble a knot of seized-up muscles in the middle of the back which totally prevents the sufferer from standing, moving, lying-down or sitting without excruciating pain. Such a condition is often ascribed to psychosomatic causes. I had a hint of the emotional background to the *rigor* that afflicts some British 'progressives' at the mention of Ireland, when a well known left wing writer – of impeccable CND and anti-Vietnam war credentials – dismissed the present conflict there as a matter of 'lunatics of the street driven by their Catholicism'. If this religious prejudice is, as I suspect, something deeper rooted than modern enlightened humanism, where in our history can we look for its origin?

I suggest that the answer is the little realised but extremely potent mingling, in the second half of the 16th century, of the Protestant Reformation with the mainstream of Renaissance literature, from the consequences of which few can have passed through our educational system entirely free. When an English Protestant monarchy made inevitable the imposition of its new religion upon all the Irish (both *colons* and aboriginals), those who rejected it became the enemies of God as well as of Whitehall: and have unhappily continued in that state to this day, though of late in our sub-conscious rather than overtly. Ideology thus took over, not only the politics, but the civilised literature and art that can give acceptable meaning to the cold cruelties of political power. The agreeable idealism of 'I am from the holy land' became converted in Shakespeare's pages to:

> Now for our Irish wars.
> We must supplant those rough rug-headed kerns
> Which live like venom where no venom else
> But only they have privilege to live. . .
>
> *Richard II*

Note: not 'the Irish are being a nuisance so we have to *subdue* them': but 'it is our absolute duty to *supplant* them simply because they exist in their own way in their own country'. Such a sentiment from Chaucer – who actually lived at the time of the wars in question – would have been surely inconceivable.

When Shakespeare – today the very foundation of our national cultural export trade, as witness the successes of the RSC all over the world – makes a statement of that kind, it tends to stick in the public mind: but Shakespeare and his like-minded contemporaries (Webster in particular) did not originate the poison. Two slightly earlier poets may be held more responsible. Edmund Spenser (Secretary to the Queen's Lord Deputy in Ireland) and John Bale (Bishop of Ossory) both wrote about Ireland and helped administer it for the Protestant Tudors: and both of them combined religious intolerance with racial prejudice to a remarkable degree. Spenser espoused genocide: and he is still read by schoolchildren in and around the A level for his melodious moral allegory. His posthumous influence upon such as Roy Mason deserves a monograph to itself.

But Bale – to me at any rate – is perhaps the more interesting case. For his career as a bishop of ferocious evangelism was enlivened by his unexpected status as the first major progressive English political playwright, and he used the one vocation to further the other with tireless energy and integrity. Before his appointment to Ireland in the reign of Edward VI, he had taken hold of the Catholic medieval morality play and applied it to the revolutionary uses of demagogic patriotic Protestantism: and – in so doing – he created more or less single-handed the secular didactic historical drama based upon real people and events instead of ethical commonplaces. His *King Johan* led direct to *King John* by William Shakespeare, who in turn led direct to you, me, Bernard Levin, and Norman St John-Stevas. I believe moreover that Bale had a good deal to do with the development of Bertolt Brecht, though no doubt less directly . . .

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He came to a diocese where there was perhaps not one person who had any inkling of what the Reformation was all about. His notion of how to close the communications-gap was immediately to denounce his flock in such temperate terms as these: 'Mark the blasphemous blindness and wilful obstinacy of this beastly papist' (an Anglo-Irish magistrate had naively asked him for a Communion in Kilkenny Cathedral in honour of St Anne): or, at a native funeral:

> Prodigious howlings and patterings as though their souls had not been quieted in Christ and redeemed by His Passion, but that they must come after and help at a pinch . . . by their sorrowful sorceries.

He presented his aggressive agit-prop plays in the streets of Kilkenny, plays written for England, for a public of confirmed Protestants: and the quietist conservative citizens (by no means disloyal to the Crown – for indeed, as it happened, there was small sign of rebellion discernible in Ireland at that time) were forced to listen to the declamatory insults of his *Comedy of St John's Preachings:*

> Give ear unto Christ . . .
> Hear neither Francis, Benedict, nor Bruno,
> Albert, nor Dominic, for they new rules invent;
> Believe with no Pope, nor priest of his consent . . .

The predictable result was what Bale called 'angers, slanders, conspiracies and in the end the slaughter of men'. Our opinion-formers today would call it Irrational Terrorism with more than one Prong: and would complacently justify all modes of repression and suppression in order to extirpate it and provide credibility for the security forces. In the years following John Bale's short-lived episcopacy (he fled the country complaining of unprovoked 'persecution'), this is exactly what happened – and worse. The improved Renaissance technology of warfare and statecraft, together with religious fervour, together with a (genuine) fear of Spanish imperialism, and the whole mix well-cemented by cultural consensus, brought total war into Ireland for the *supplanting of the kerns* throughout the reign of Queen Elizabeth. By the time of Oliver Cromwell the association of such war with the rise of the English people to determine its destiny set a pattern from which our own generation – including both readers of and writers for the *New Statesman* and *Pluto Playscripts* – has not noticeably diverged.

I suppose John Bale did more harm to Anglo-Irish relations than any one man in history in so brief a space of time: and yet he remains the father of the modern British theatre: in the terms of the 16th century he was a man of the 'left'; and he believed it his duty to impose upon the Irish not only English civil and ecclesiastical government, but also the forms, manner and content of officially-received English culture as expressed in his own theatrical milieu. He, more than anyone, began the justification of ideological imperialism abroad by social and religious radicalism at home: and the later importation of 'the King's Protestants' to dominate Ulster did no more than reinforce the noxious collusion.

We now see a Labour Movement that will not stir a finger to demand withdrawal from Ireland: and the bloodbath-threatening Protestantism of a portion of the *Nine* Counties of Ulster is still seized on as an excuse by British socialist and liberal elements to shuffle off their responsibility for the knee-deep pool of blood that has flooded the bathroom floor through all of the last ten years. Ten years . . . ? Or four hundred?

Why, after all this time, do we still go along with Bale and maintain that we are 'persecuted' at the hands of the murderous Irish? And why, after all this time, do we still like to declare that our literature and drama is a continuing source of enlightened values far superior to the base practice of our ephemeral politicians? In Spenser, Shakespeare, Webster – later on in Marvell and Milton – later on in Kingsley and Thackeray, Trollope and Kipling, even in George Orwell, we find always recurrent the same strange vein of obsessed distressed uncomprehending hostility to Irish habits of life and their political embodiment. No other foreign people has elicited from us quite the same deep-rooted emotional reaction to be kept going for so long, and so unchallenged by the normal humane areas of public feeling. For Zimbabwe, Chile, Vietnam and the massacred leviathans of the deep there are lobbies, factions, pressure-groups of political significance and intellectual weight: they draw upon both Oxbridge and Redbrick for their knowledge of public affairs, and their members' individual intercourse is sweetened and ornamented with value-pregnant self-questionings out of the whole range of Eng. Lit. as moderated by the likes of Leavis. And yet – save for the Lot-like example (and *he* was not enough to hold the brimstone from the roofs of Sodom) of a few intrepid agitators – all these worthy Britons have steadfastly refused to mobilise to extricate their nation from its incapacitating moral cramp created by the oppression of Ireland. The springs of their cultural psychology remain incorrigibly polluted by the same putrefaction that reeks from the death's-head guffaw of the club-comedian's 'Irish joke'.

I cannot believe that the 'lunatics on the street' will find reason to stop killing people on or off the street until our literate 'bourgeois' elite (who are, after all, the educators and informers of our supposedly potential 'revolutionary' masses) can at last come to terms with what it is they have been reading ever since childhood and 'critically assessing' through their college careers. I myself, as a dramatist, have no choice but to regard myself as an heir and executor of the infected heritage of John Bale: I could wish that a larger proportion of my profession – and of our audiences in their subsidised theatre-seats – were a wee bit more aware of the contradictions implied.

(Illustration based on 'The Pope As Satan-Antichrist' by Melchior Lorch, 1545.)

John Arden will be developing these themes at a teach-in on British culture and colonialism at the Half Moon Theatre on 28 and 29 July.

Among this week's contributors:

ALEX CALLINICOS edits the *Socialist Review*. He is co-author of *Southern Africa After Soweto*.

OLIVIA MANNING is the author of 12 novels, three books of short stories and a history of Stanley's rescue of Emin Pasha. She is at present engaged on the third volume of a trilogy of novels based in the Middle East.

JACQUES BERTHOUD is a senior lecturer in the English Department at the University of Southampton. His books include *Joseph Conrad: The Major Phase*.

JEREMY TAMBLING is a teacher, WEA lecturer and Cambridge extra-mural lecturer.

PETER REDGROVE

The God of Glass

A Morality

In his new novel Peter Redgrove adopts the mode and idiom of a horror story of exorcism to direct attention to the serious themes of adult rebirth. The radio play *The God of Glass* won the Original Single Play Award in the Imperial Tobacco Awards for Radio 1978.

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and other new poems

Peter Redgrove's new collection of poems have as their common theme, 'the marvellous told plainly, and the plain discovered to be absolutely marvellous.' The collection is a Poetry Book Society Choice. *0 7100 0255 6 paperback* £2.95

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SIMON STUART

In this highly original study, which he calls 'an essay in applied psychoanalysis', the author considers a number of major texts from a Kleinian point of view, believing that criticism has much to gain if it can assimilate the observations of the Kleinian school. *0 7100 0179 7* £8.95

On Clichés

The Supersedure of Meaning by Function in Modernity

ANTON C. ZIJDERVELD

The author sees clichés not only as manners of speech, but also as forms of thought, action and even emotion, which mould our thinking acting and feeling in social life. He describes our society as 'clichégenic' and argues that, although we should aim to restrict their predominance, clichés are in fact indispensable to social communication. *International Library of Sociology 0 7100 0186 X* £5.95

Russell

R. M. SAINSBURY

Dr Sainsbury's lucid account deals with Betrand Russell's main contributions to philosophy from the time of the *Principles of Mathematics* until his last major philosophical publication *Human Knowledge* in 1948, examining his contributions to the philosophy of language, of knowledge and of mathematics. *Arguments of the Philosophers 0 7100 0155 X* £13.95

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Alex Callinicos

Ockham's Razor

Hegel and Modern Society by CHARLES TAYLOR *Cambridge* £9.50 and £2.95
Ownership of the Image: Elements for a Marxist Theory of Law by BERNARD EDELMAN *Routledge* £7.95
On Law and Ideology by PAUL HIRST *Macmillan* £8.95 and £3.95
Land, Labour and Economic Discourse by KEITH TRIBE *Routledge* £6.95 and £3.95

Hegel is one of the main obstacles to the reception of Marxism into British intellectual culture. English Hegelianism was long ago extirpated by Bertrand Russell, G. E. Moore and other founders of analytical philosophy. It is difficult now to believe that Benedetto Croce could write in 1906 that Hegel studies were further developed in Britain than on the continent. Yet Hegel's thought is central to an understanding of Marxism, and not only because of his influence on Marx himself (who acknowledged his debt in the postface to the second edition of *Capital*). All the main schools of 20th-century western Marxism take Hegel as their starting point, even where, as in the case of Althusser and della Volpe, they are concerned to eliminate his baleful influence.

The publication in 1975 of Charles Taylor's major study, *Hegel*, was an important intellectual event. Taylor sought to make sense of Hegel's writings in terms accessible to those trained in the analytical tradition, and (more importantly) to those without any philosophical training, at the same time refusing to surrender an awareness of Hegel's importance for continental philosophers and for contemporary political debates. The result, despite some faults, was the best book on Hegel in English. The publication of a condensed version of less intimidating length than the original is to be welcomed, despite Taylor's extraordinarily cavalier treatment of Marx. In an astounding move for a socialist and a student of thought, he identifies Marxism with Jacobinism on the grounds that both seek the abolition of social difference and therefore lay the basis for the 'absolute freedom and terror' depicted by Hegel in his analysis of the French revolution. It should be sufficient to point out that the communist goal of the abolition of classes does not imply the elimination of all differences. On the contrary, as Marx put it, communism is 'a society in which the full and free development of every individual forms the ruling principle'.

Interestingly, there are parallels to be drawn between Hegel and one of the most influential of contemporary Marxist philosophers, Louis Althusser. Both shove the human subject off the centre of the stage. For Hegel individual self-consciousness is simply a moment in the self realisation of Absolute Spirit. For Althusser the notion of the subject, of the human agent as autonomous and self-subsistent, is constructed and sustained within ideology: individuals are the 'bearers' or 'supports' of the relations of production.

Similarly, Bernard Edelman argues in a book first published in Paris as part of Maspero's 'Theorie' series edited by Althusser, that the legal systems of capitalist society rest on 'the postulate that man is naturally a subject in law, that is a potential owner'. Capitalism treats everyone as free and equal commodity owners, the only difference being that some – the workers – have only their labour-power to sell. From this there arises the idea of subjects free and equal in the sight of the law. As far as it goes, this is an interesting approach. However, Edelman goes little further than establishing the ideological character of the notion of the 'subject in law' (by means of an analysis of French photography law – hence the title) and tracing its emergence in the legal philosophies of Kant and Hegel. Moreover, he writes with a mannered preciosity of style apparently popular among Parisian philosophers which soon becomes a bore.

The Marxist theory of law is also discussed by Paul Hirst (who contributed an introduction to Edelman's book). However, this collection of essays forms part of a wider attempt to reconstruct the conceptual foundations of Marxism. Its origins lie in Althusser's work, and in particular in his stress on the 'rigour' and 'scientificity' of Marx's writings and in his hostility to 'reductionist' versions of Marxism which treat social phenomena as mere passive reflections of the economy. Hirst helped to found in the early 1970s a journal called *Theoretical Practice* whose aim was to continue Althusser's project of developing a rigorous, non-reductionist Marxism. The journal soon succumbed to the dissensions of the editors, but there appeared in 1977-8 a collective work in two volumes, *Marx's 'Capital' and Capitalism Today*, to which Hirst contributed and which dumped so much of Marxism (the labour theory of value, historical materialism, the tendency of the rate of profit to fall) that it is difficult to say what is left.

Paul Hirst is the Ockham of the contemporary British left, ever ready to slice away incoherent arguments, dubious assumptions, unclear concepts. These essays show him at work with his razor, settling accounts with Althusser's reformulation of the Marxist theory of ideology and with the attempts of E. B. Pashukanis and Karl Renner to develop a Marxist account of law. Classical Marxism's failure, Hirst argues, lies in its claim to offer a *general* causal explanation of social phenomena based on the proposition that the economy determines the social whole. Ultimately such a claim is epistemological: it refuses to admit as valid any social theory which does not conform to certain general criteria. However, there are no such general criteria, Hirst claims. There is simply a collection of different 'discursive practices' (theories and their institutional contexts), each with their own distinct criteria of validity varying with the nature and purpose of the practice in question: 'techniques of criticism of biblical texts are of no use in garage mechanics'.

Keith Tribe's study of the emergence of 'economic discourse' is an application of this theory (or anti-theory) of knowledge. He is concerned to displace 'teleological' histories of economics organised around a culmination point – Smith, Marx or Walras – and to show that economic texts can best be understood not in relation to the outside world (the development of capitalism, the Industrial Revolution and so on) but in terms of their own internal 'discursive' organisation. The idea that theories involve a reference to an 'extra-discursive order' in the real world is a pernicious myth.

The point of all this (heavily influenced by the writings of Michel Foucault) is to drive out of Marxism the notion that social formations have a necessary structure depending on the relations of production prevailing within them and that capitalism possesses certain inherent tendencies which govern its development. 'These patterns', Hirst writes, 'are an incubus whose parasitic grip has long enslaved and enfeebled Marxism as a political theory.' All we can do is analyse the varying combinations of different practices.

The trouble is that Hirst's criticisms of epistemology, if valid, would apply to all theorising, however specific. *Any* concept sets limits to its application, rules out certain possibilities and posits the existence of some pattern in the instances falling under it. Garage mechanics operates within the limits set for it by the concept of a car and various theories concerning the internal combustion engine, the construction of cars, and so on. Without these limits it would not be a practice. Moreover, the concept of a car is formed within human discourse rather than in the outside world, but if it failed to bear any relation to what cars actually were like, then garage mechanics would be useless. It is impossible to avoid reference beyond our concepts to reality, and in this respect Hirst and Tribe are as epistemological as the rest of us.

What about the politics Hirst is seeking to free from the incubus of classical Marxism? An illustration is offered when Hirst argues that the traditional emphasis on the determining role of the economy prevents socialists from seeing workers' co-operatives as a significant step towards socialism. As the assets of one workers' co-op, KME, go under the autioneer's hammer it is difficult not to believe that the relations of production have a greater efficacy than Hirst would admit.

Then there is the extraordinary outburst at the end of Tribe's otherwise scholarly and interesting book. Discussing the Ricardian socialists of the 1820s and 1830s, who advocated the abolition of the state, Tribe explodes:

> The state has to be smashed at one blow or not at all. The utopian nature of this requisite provided no alternative to this but a relapse into revolutionary rhetoric, continually denouncing the power of capital but impotent to oppose it effectively, except by issuing oppositional tracts or by engaging in sporadic and futile uprisings and riots.

I would rather have any one of these 'sporadic and futile uprisings and riots', whose history has been so beautifully reconstructed by Edward Thompson, Gwyn Williams and others, than Mr Tribe for all his rigour, his 'effective' opposition to capitalism and his impatience with the stupidity of working people, who will go on fighting for higher wages rather than listen to him.

There is nothing new about the politics of

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these 'new' Marxists. In most respects they were anticipated some time ago by Eduard Bernstein, who also regarded the conceptual machinery of orthodox Marxism (and the intransigent, irresponsible struggles of workers) as obstacles to the pursuit of 'effective' politics (he was keen on co-ops too). When Bernstein first raised his head, exactly 100 years ago, Marx and Engels expostulated:

> For almost 40 years we have stressed the class struggle as the most immediate driving power in history and, in particular, the class struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat as the great lever of the modern social upheaval: therefore it is impossible for us to ally ourselves with people who want to eliminate this class struggle 'from the movement'.

The informing purpose of Marx's thought – the self-emancipation of the working class – is quite absent from the writings of Hirst and his collaborators. All that is left is a technique and a vague goal ('co-operative and non-authoritarian social relations' – Hirst's 'rigorous' reformulation of the abolition of classes). What sense is there in calling this 'Marxism'?

Hugh Brogan

War Criminals

Sideshow: Kissinger, Nixon and the Destruction of Cambodia by WILLIAM SHAWCROSS *Deutsch* £6.95

Readers of the NEW STATESMAN's extracts from *Sideshow* will have a very good idea of Mr Shawcross's themes, if not of the detail in which he lucidly presents them. I am therefore free to concentrate on some other aspects of the book; but flesh and blood cannot resist the desire to make three preliminary points which sum up what I have learned from this important work.

First, Cambodia was bloodily sacrificed because Nixon successfully evaded the boasted checks and balances of the US Constitution. He knew that Congress was profoundly opposed to the policies that he wished to pursue – in particular, the bombing and invasion of a neutral country – yet he bent all his energies, and the great powers of his office, to getting his own way just the same. Henry Kissinger gave him enthusiastic and invaluable assistance. It took Congress five years to get back its rightful powers, and even then it could do so only at the cost of betraying those Indochinese who had trusted the United States. 'You people are worse than the French,' were the bitter last words of one of them.

Secondly, the hideous *débâcle* of the second Indochinese War was in large part caused by the extent to which incompetent American generals were able to overbear the civilians who were supposed to control them. This point has already been amply documented by Guenter Lewy in his *America in Vietnam*; now Mr Shawcross proves it in terms of the Cambodian tragedy. He further shows that in this case it was above all Nixon who gave the military the free hand which they so disastrously abused. The President was determined to prove himself a Teddy Roosevelt, a Patton; 'I'll show them who's tough,' he snarled. He incited and approved all plans for greater destruction and a wider war, and further indulged his neurosis by excluding the State Department and the Defense Secretary, as well as Congress, from the central decision-making process. He then in effect handed over all the crucial decisions to the officers in the field. The traditions of Marshall and Eisenhower, the victory won at such cost by Harry Truman when he dismissed MacArthur, were all forgotten.

Thirdly, his two closest aides, Kissinger and Haig, won their enormous influence by slavishly furthering their leader's wishes. Of this precious pair, Haig, programmed to obey his commander-in-chief unthinkingly, was clearly the lesser villain. Of Kissinger it is only necessary to say that his reputation will never recover from this book.

The documentation of *Sideshow* is not quite perfect: there are fewer references than one might wish, in part because Mr Shawcross has to protect some of his sources; and they are all at the back, according to the deplorable modern practice, instead of at the foot of the page. But these are only marginal drawbacks. The predominant effect of the annotation is of a glorious advertisement for the Freedom of Information Act.

It is not just that because of the Act Mr Shawcross was able to force the bureaucracy to disgorge a great deal of material which would otherwise have been inaccessible for years or decades or perhaps for ever. Except for a few conspicuous instances, such as the cables which show how Nixon and his generals launched the B-52 bombers illegally against Cambodia, Mr Shawcross seems to have found the classified material more useful as a means of checking his other sources and of plugging gaps in the story than as a unique fount of information and interpretation. (All the same, the material is valuable enough to cast an ironic light on Kissinger's Tayloresque proposition, advanced in *A World Restored*, that 'most secret documents are not worth stealing' – which in turn reflects on the Nixon Administration's suicidal obsession with leaks.) The broad outline of his narrative is not new, and might have been established without any access to classified material. But the detail, which gives the book its interest and conviction, is, for the most part, fresh, and derives in many cases from sources which might never have opened up but for the Act.

Such men as Melvin Laird, Nixon's first Secretary of Defense, and William Colby, the former head of the CIA, presumably talked so frankly to Mr Shawcross because they reflected that since he was so certain to find out so much, he might as well be told a bit more, especially anything which served to put their own performances in a better, or at least a more comprehensible light. And once such snowballs start rolling it is hard to stop them. In the end Mr Shawcross interviewed more than 300 people and corresponded with many more. The result is an extraordinarily clear and vivid picture.

But perhaps the most impressive thing is the immense amount of information that he extracted from previously published documents, such as the records of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. The result is an extraordinarily clear and vivid picture. Open government is now a fact of life in America. If only there were any prospect of such a thing in Britain.

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Jeremy Tambling

All In Pieces

Renaissance Man and Creative Thinking by DOROTHY KOENIGSBERGER *Harvester* £13.50

Astrology and the Popular Press by BERNARD CAPP *Faber* £15

The Pattern of Expectation 1644-2001 by I. F. CLARKE *Cape* £7.50

T. S. Eliot described a 'dissociation of sensibility . . . from which we have never recovered'. John Donne, writing in 1611 before that great 17th-century change came about, observed that 'new philosophy calls all in doubt . . . 'Tis all in pieces, all coherence gone.' Donne was excited by the prospect of loss of a unified world-view, if appalled as well. Reading Dorothy Koenigsberger's book, we are reminded of what a loss of vision we have sustained.

It is not an easy book: scholarship does not sit lightly on Dr Koenigsberger; she may be certain where her argument is going but she doesn't always help the reader to follow her into her densely written penetralia. Her thesis is that the doctrine of universal harmony was a Renaissance commonplace; harmony of the mind with nature, and between man and God. The idea of tracing analogies between parts of nature and the mind of man, Pythagorean and Platonic in origin, remained influential (as late as Wordsworth in 1814 we get 'How exquisitely the individual Mind . . . to the external world/Is fitted'); but the handful of thinkers studied here view the harmony as something to be appreciated not intellectually and inwardly (as by the medieval schoolmen) but intuitively:

> Taking their cues, among others, from a Cusan view of knowledge, they (Alberti and Leonardo) formed an idea of direct recognition . . . this was a supposition about the ability of the trained intellect to see and recognise absolutely good propositions and the principles and causes of things within the many examples of nature.

But in seeing harmony in nature – the evidence of design – not Platonically but in an Aristotelean fashion, as something to be grasped and investigated, an hypothesis was formed which would lead to the actual break-up of any such idea of harmony.

I'm going a bit beyond Dr Koenigsberger at this point. But I find the most interesting chapter in her book the one where she discusses the split in Leonardo da Vinci between his belief in universal harmony and his inability to relate man to his external circumstances in *any* kind of unity. Leonardo's Faust-like ambition to grasp at the totality of experience gives way to a tragic sense of near futility – and tragic isn't meant to convey the idea of 'depressing'; it is the basis for what is great in Leonardo's art, as the author brings it, too shortly, alas, to our attention.

The contrast between the comfortable neo-Platonism of Ficino's Academy and the probing, Platonic-in-name quest of these other Renaissance figures is exciting, and far-reaching. (Even in music, with keyboard harmony, 'the ear, not number was guiding the tunes' – the empiricist cast out Pythagoras.) She gives us the beginning of the great change that marked out the 17th century and which is implicitly the theme of Bernard Capp's almost, I imagine, unique study of astrology and almanacks. Dr Capp's bibliography is long, his range of reference generous, but though he is on lighter ground than Dr Koenigsberger, the sense of an academic talking to academics still prevails.

This is interesting as a study, though, which tells you a lot about the by-ways of astrology, reminds you that even Puritan theology encouraged star-gazing, that Kepler was an astrologist, that this type of haruspication didn't begin to die down, in England, till the established church and state of 1660 onwards decided to 'formulate a safer religion, purged of enthusiasm' and replaced a universe where the unlikely could and would happen with the Newtonian, ordered, mechanistic cosmos, and so went in for Natural Theology.

While reading Dr Capp, your imagination is allowed to work, to picture living without watches or clocks, relying upon the changes of the moon and the stars to fix your times, letting your Almanack tell you what Feast Day, or Holy Day, or Fair Day it was, and letting it date your life by such mnemonics as 'since the last great frost 20 yeeres' or 'since the creation of the world 5577 yeeres'. To ripe and ripe and then to rot and rot under the sense of everything being so near to you, everything connected, not as a matter of so many discrete facts, but in a sense of unity – that is part of what we have lost. Bernard Capp's book enables us to glimpse the source of people's political and social education – the pervasive almanack. And the almanack went on. Moore's didn't begin as the Whig thing it was till 1699. Thomas Hardy's novels remind us of the vestiges of astrology and of fortune-gazing in the early 19th century. It is gone now, and all the chic, modish and silly astrology of the press today can't do anything for it.

Prophecy may be the most gratuitous form of mistake, as George Eliot told us, but novels about the future bid fair to having replaced astrology as the form prophecy is likely to take now, if we are to believe I. F. Clarke. The treatment of literary utopias and dystopias that make up this chatty, undemanding book indicates the way in which the scientific method has invaded our thinking. The discovery of no harmony between the mind of man and nature (the first of these two more important for the Renaissance thinker) has led to the subjugation of man to nature (in the name of 'control of the environment') and to the virtual obliteration of the concept of man as an intentional, creative, imaginative being. ('We live in a society that has trained many minds to reject and push aside that which cannot be recorded, confirmed and reproduced. We really do not know if we should believe in such things,' writes Dr Koenigsberger.) As one who believes that the result will most likely be the awful kind of totalitarian regime depicted in *We*, *Brave New World* or *1984* (three books discussed, very blandly, by Clarke – *mutatis mutandis*, these states where there is mechanistic takeover are all the same), I think the need is for a much more severe and definite book than this one. Renaissance man could believe in personality, even if the fault might have been in his stars not in himself, occasionally: the loss of a world-view has led to the gross materialism that Clarke brings before us. He gives us the evidence: he lacks a point of view.

Claire Tomalin

Blight

The Second Mrs Hardy by ROBERT GITTINGS and JO MANTON *Heinemann* £5.50

Thomas Hardy emerged from the second volume of Robert Gittings's biography as a mean, cruel old fantasist, and both his wives as his victims, having in each case fancied themselves originally as Muses. His first wife Emma kept an elaborate diary of hate in which she frequently likened her great husband to the wife-murderer Crippen. His second, Florence, wrote to a friend soon after marriage in 1914, 'He wanted a housekeeper who could be a companion and read to him – etc. – so I came in'. His attitude was summed up by his parlourmaid: 'Myself, I do not think he thought of them as women, but just shadowy figures, fitting into a space like a jigsaw.'

Hardy, creator of some of the most palpable women in fiction and hymner of erotic anticipation and nostalgia in his poetry, simply took no notice of the real thing when it was installed beside him. Dr Gittings and his wife Jo Manton, who researched the Hardy books with him, were understandably drawn into investigating the two Mrs Hardys and presenting them as something more than jigsaw spaces. In *The Older Hardy* the irony of Hardy's posthumous passion for Emma, after decades of slighting, was made quite plain; and the facts of Florence's entry into Hardy's

Blake Morrison

An Address

O great ones, stalagmites of glass and air,
strange laddered heights, Druidic outcrops,
white headstones for a million citizens,
tell us then: how do we stand with you?
Each morning when I pass you seem to rise
out of the mist like ancient ghost-ships,
your little balconies ensigns of washing,
your passengers squinnying for land.
Or at night you're a shrine, candles burning:
as the moon comes they go out one by one.
Meanwhile your friends grow in the city:
their piled windows glitter like ice-cubes,
restaurants turn like long-playing records
only the rich can afford. Home or work,
most of us now visit your glacier slopes:
all day packed cable-cars ride up and down.
So clear from your peaks, no one would
guess
at the layered misery inside: the screaming,
the neighbours who are never in or never
neighbours, the hurt writing on the wall.
Yet it's there: however homely your shape
– battery, sliced loaf, corn on the cob –
the same ridiculous price must be paid,
the same sacrifices flung at your feet.
O great ones, only a fool would blame you
for all wrongs, but they'll tell one day
how in your tall corridors people tried
to live with each other, and found it hard.

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life (she 26 and he 65), the years of concealed friendship and the difficulties of the subsequent marriage, were set out. This book is a splendid codicil in which Florence is brought into the foreground and her attitude to Hardy clarified, perceptively and charitably.

Florence Dugdale was the daughter of a headmaster of a Church school in Enfield. His family had come from Dorset, driven to London by lack of work, and he had acquired a teaching certificate, just in time for the Education Act of 1870 to benefit him. Appointed to a headship at 23, he remained in the same post for 47 years. He married a governess; and their five daughters were brought up to earn their own livings. But Florence's work as a teacher exhausted her and satisfied none of her yearnings for culture and romance – the two rather dangerously yoked together in her mind. She wanted to write. Enfield offered her a few chances; a children's column in a local paper, a literary society where she gave a paper on Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*. She also met a tubercular young man who did some journalistic work and compiled anthologies, Alfred Hyatt. Hyatt loved her, but they were in no position to marry. And it was through his *Pocket Thomas Hardy* that Florence first met her future husband, whom she viewed with reverence.

Hardy was moved by her frailty and slightly melancholy beauty. He was also prepared to further her literary ambitions by recommending her to various newspaper editors and publishers, some of whom did give her work but always chiefly with a view to pleasing the old man. She did not make a success of any of this. After a while she found different employment, as a companion, where quiet good manners and sympathy were all that was required. For some time she helped in the care of the mad wife of a rich Dublin doctor, Sir Thornley Stoker, and she won his gratitude to the extent of receiving a large legacy when he died. By then she had also made friends with Emma Hardy, managing this so skilfully that it was never necessary to reveal that she had known Thomas for some years and indeed accompanied him on holidays. Emma came to love and depend on Florence at least as much as he did; the two women encouraged one another in literary projects, and Florence's view of Hardy began to waver.

By the time Emma (and Alfred Hyatt) had died, there was no romantic feeling left between Hardy and Florence. The marriage was a misery to her from the start. She was jealous of his suddenly aroused passion for his dead wife and suffered wretchedly from his refusal to spend money on entertaining, holidays, or a more comfortable home life. And when finally he died, although she found herself unexpectedly rich, whatever capacity she had had for enjoying life had withered. Blights fell upon her: a cruel caricature in Somerset Maugham's *Cakes and Ale*; the treachery of the seemingly friendly Siegfried Sassoon; an abortive flirtation with another notoriously tricky old man of letters, James Barrie. As Gittings points out, her best achievement was probably her work for a Dorchester housing society which helped to clear the slums of Hardy's Mixen Lane. She died of cancer within a decade of Hardy's death. Good writers are not famous for being kind to their wives. Anyone who aspires to being a Muse should remember that it takes the rubbery strength and resilience of a Frieda Lawrence to come through undamaged.

Arthur Marshall

No Such Luck

John Buchan And His World by JANET ADAM SMITH *Thames & Hudson* £4.95.

'I cannot believe', says John Buchan in his own rather thin and unrevealing autobiography, *Memory Hold-the-Door*, 'that the external incidents of my life are important enough to be worth chronicling in detail.' This has not been, and to our advantage, the view of Miss Janet Adam Smith who now follows up her previous, full-length biography (1965) with a shorter account which makes use both of new material which has come to light (notebooks, account books, a letter-book and the archives of Nelson, Buchan's publisher from 1906 to 1929) and 121 illustrations of places and people in and around his life.

There can never have been such a success story. Nothing ever went wrong for him. Born in 1875, the son of a minister of the John Knox Free Church of Scotland who preached the Gospel at street corners, he had an impeccably unprivileged and non-affluent childhood and youth at Hutcheson's Grammar School (two miles from the Gorbals) and made his way thence by scholarships to Glasgow University, where Gilbert Murray gave him extra tutorials and considered him 'a treasure of a pupil'. And so to Brasenose and Oxford in 1895.

'Everything he put his hand to prospered', a Glasgow contemporary wrote of Buchan. He certainly convinced Oxford – a classical scholarship, President of the Union, and a First in Greats. He read for the Bar, he wrote regularly for the *Spectator*, he published his early novels, he assisted Lord Milner, then High Commissioner of South Africa, to tidy up there after the Boer War ('I don't like him', was his first opinion of Cecil Rhodes, 'but he is undoubtedly a great man'). He disliked African towns but fell hook, line and sinker for the veldt which, with its jagged blue mountains so reminiscent of the Coolins, and its streams and long green glens, was to have such a powerful influence on his writing and produced *Prester John*.

Back in London at the Bar and by now something of a social catch and in great demand for country-house weekends, he had the good fortune to meet and marry Susan Grosvenor, grand-daughter of Lord Ebury, and through her parents related to Westminsters and Wellingtons, to Lovelaces, Lytteltons and Talbots. It is at about this point (and it is no fault of Miss Adam Smith) that one starts to long for some sort of skeleton in the cupboard – tipsy incarcerations in Vine Street, Soho indiscretions, vast gambling debts or a torrid affair at Oxford with a tobacconist's daughter (always at great risk in the undergraduate world of that day). No such luck.

The happy marriage and honeymoon provided only a momentary hiccough in the steady onward march of events. He inaugurated (and how grateful we should be) the Nelson Sixpenny Classics and the Sevenpenny Library of popular reprints (Wells, Henry James, Conrad, and so on). He wrote *The Thirty-Nine Steps*. He was the wartime Flanders correspondent for *The Times*. He was Director of Intelligence in Beaverbrook's new Ministry of Information. The Buchan nursery filled up (how did he find the time, one wonders?) and he bought the, for him, ideal country house, Elsfield Manor.

And on yet again to election as MP for the Scottish Universities, various academic honours, the CH, a new novel every year and, not surprisingly, a duodenal ulcer. And finally, and no life ended with less of an anti-climax, Governor General of Canada and Baron Tweedsmuir, dying in Canada from a cerebral thrombosis in 1940.

Obviously a very good and kind and conscientious and generous man and a gifted historian and storyteller, so what then is wrong and why has one reader at least some reservations about him? It is, I think, the relentless calculation with which all this was achieved. From his undergraduate days it was his custom to write out a 'List of Things to be Done'. This included a section called 'Honours Gained and to be Gained', one of which, Fellow of All Souls, eluded him. This is very off-putting. To paraphrase Lady Bracknell, an honour should come upon a young man as a surprise, pleasant or unpleasant as the case may be. The items scheduled among the plans for 1919 include settling in Elsfield, publishing *Mr Standfast* and, 'LL.D and KCB'. Oh dear oh dear. How agreeable it would have been to find that he had perhaps once, in moonstruck mood, done something wild and risky and frivolous and unforeseen and just for the hell of it. Can it be that he was totally without humour? The books would seem to suggest so.

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Jacques Berthoud

Lie Detector

Joseph Conrad: The Three Lives by FREDERICK R. KARL *Faber* £12.50
Joseph Conrad: Language and Fictional Self-Consciousness by JEREMY HAWTHORN *Arnold* £5.50

One of the many reasons why Conrad is important to us is that he makes us call into question what we normally take for granted. His capacity to detect illusion where we assume reality, or convention where we suppose natural law, is what earns him his place among modernist heroes. It takes a biography like Professor Karl's, however, to remind us that scepticism – the real thing, not the pose – seldom makes life comfortable for the sceptic. Much the best part of this new book relates in minute and often harrowing detail the story of the miseries, anxieties, guilts and breakdowns which the letters of Conrad's maturity so relentlessly reflect.

But such scepticism can also confer very significant advantages. For example, it made it possible for Conrad to raise the English political novel – by which I mean the novel that takes as its subject the political life of a given community – to an altogether new level of intellectual maturity. *The Secret Agent* – one of his three masterpieces in this genre – is a profound analysis of English liberal conservatism as challenged by an assortment of imported revolutionary and counter-revolutionary ideologies. There can be little doubt that Conrad owes at least something of the precision and power of his diagnosis to the circumstances of his life, that is to say, to his internationalism. No mere Englishman would have permitted himself to express quite Conrad's love and pride in the traditional decencies of English life; nor, on the other hand, would he have registered with anything like Conrad's appalled lucidity the blind – and in the event fatal – complacency enshrined in those decencies.

Professor Karl's biography is much stronger on penalties than on rewards. He tells us in his foreword that what distinguishes his book from its predecessors is his emphasis on the relationship of Conrad's life and work. His thousand pages contain, of course, many discussions of Conrad's work; but these are scarcely conducted in terms that Conrad himself would have accepted or even understood. Consider, for example, the generalisation on Conrad's 'Politics' that concludes the chapter on *Nostromo*:

> As a creative artist, Conrad intertwined his politics with matters of tone, texture, irony, all of them indescribable matters. These qualities not only affect his politics, they *are* his politics. In every political act, for Conrad, the entire population is involved; there can be no separation of government or leaders from the people, and therefore, there can be no such thing as a distinct political idea.'

Something, no doubt, is struggling to come out of these sentences; Professor Karl has made sure that he is the only person who knows what it is. To be a 'creative artist' in the required sense, he seems to be saying, take 'politics' in one hand and 'texture' in the other, ensure that your texture is both 'indescribable' and also indistinguishable from your politics, and 'intertwine' them together. If you do this properly, you will become a political novelist, i.e. a novelist for whom 'there can be no such thing as a distinct political idea'. And if you are still not sure what this is, the very next sentence will put your mind at rest: you will have achieved the status of 'a Hegelian without the character of an Idea or Ideal.'

Why does a Professor of English who is skilled, as his book demonstrates from beginning to end, in the art of disentangling fact from falsehood, think and write like this? As general editor of Conrad's correspondence, he has had access to several hundred letters, mostly to publishers, unavailable to earlier biographers. This new material makes very little difference to the first half of the life; and while it amplifies and confirms, it does not radically alter our picture of its second half. To bring up to date the last biography – Jocelyn Baines's, now nearly 20 years old – is therefore a modest task, though, of course, a useful one; and inasmuch as Professor Karl has performed it well, scholars will be grateful. But alas he is more ambitious.

It is a truth deeply to be regretted that no author can do more than he has it in him to do. Jocelyn Baines understood this and decided to remain unpretentiously faithful to his subject. The result was a small classic – a life of Conrad that was, and is, at once scholarly and readable. But he also had to pay for his lack of portentousness. He has been much patronised by his inferiors – including Professor Karl, who implies in his foreword that Baines ignored the 'psychological development' of the man and writer, and who states in his text that Baines's 'considerable scholarship is diluted whenever he attempts critical statements'. Well then, how does Professor Karl himself show up in this area?

One example will have to suffice – but it is the pivot of the book, Chapter 19 ('The Novelist: 1899-1904'). Here Professor Karl very properly proposes to 'account for the fact that Conrad . . . resisted those themes and ideas which would have turned . . . his works into imitations of *The Prisoner of Zenda*.' To do this, he explains, 'we must concern ourselves with the imaginative forces which established passivity and inertness'. What does this mean? To judge by what Professor Karl himself does, it means generating an elaborate, mysterious, rhetorically excited typology of the imagination (whether process or product it is impossible to tell) in which Conrad's alleged 'image-clusters', betraying an obsession with 'passivity, inertness, longueurs, langor as a metaphysical concept', merge into a notion of art as a seductive but fatal hoard, like Kurtz's ivory, Nostromo's silver, Wagner's Rhinegold, and even Yeats's *animus* (sic) *mundi*. This strange hybrid, neither myth, nor image, nor dream, nor symbol, but born of all these, and several others besides, is obviously not going to explain anything to anybody, as its author himself suspects: 'beyond this the idea blurs . . .'

At the climax of his peroration on what distinguishes Conrad from Anthony Hope, Professor Karl decides to consult Conrad. This is what he finds: 'My work shall not be an utter failure because it has the solid basis of a definite intention – first: and next because it is not an endless analysis of affected sentiments but in its essence it is action.' Perhaps the deadliest of the many ironies attendant on this quotation is Professor Karl's failure to betray the slightest suspicion of how comprehensively it cancels out his psycho-aesthetic enterprise.

No such irony attends Jeremy Hawthorn's succinct, lucid, and original *Language and Fictional Self-Consciousness*. Starting where Professor Karl fails to conclude – with Conrad's own understanding of the world – he discovers at the centre of Conrad's work a theme which has become a commonplace of progressive thought: the arbitrariness of the linguistic sign. Far from turning Conrad into a neo-structuralist, however, this alerted him to the dangers inherent in the detachment that language confers. Hawthorn's analysis of the major novels rests on the claim that precisely to the degreee to which language gives us freedom over reality it gives us an opportunity for deception. I urge Professor Karl to read this book.

Patricia Craig

Cripples

Tender Mercies by ROSELLEN BROWN *Hutchinson* £5.95
The Beautiful Words by MERVYN JONES *Deutsch* £4.95
The Execution of Mayor Yin by CHEN JO-HSI *Allen & Unwin* £5.95
Agatha by KATHLEEN TYNAN *Weidenfeld* £4.50

It is not entirely an original device to place a handicapped person at the centre of a piece of fiction; perhaps, however, it may be seen as a kind of reaction to all those tales of domestic life in which troubles proliferate in conditions of absolute normality. Rosellen Brown's heroine is in a spectacular predicament: she is paralysed from the neck down, as the result of an accident caused by her husband in a moment of thoughtlessness. The theme of the novel is rehabilitation, in a wide sense; it's a difficult subject, rife with unease and emotion, full of dangers, for the novelist, of lapses of taste and errors of form.

Overloaded analogies may be drawn: if the wife has become a dead weight, does this imply that she was already dead to the marriage? The details of the situation are distressing, the feelings of the characters are complicated by guilt and a special variety of bitterness, so highly charged it's almost converted into a positive force. One possible tone of conversation is a defensive smartness with an undercurrent of acid; *Tender Mercies* is not a book about futile indulgence. At the worst moments the husband, the culprit, resorts to a desperate clowning.

It's a difficult subject, but the author has achieved a density of language and feeling which represents an efficient fusion of manner and matter: this is reality on a special plane. Just occasionally the sensitive touch becomes a little too marked and showy; it is simply going too far, for example, to present the thoughts of maimed Laura in a format which degenerates into poetic incoherence. But on the whole the narrative method works well; the subtle approach may lead to its own kind

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of inflations ('The world does not consult you to find out if you think it's real') but it contributes style, a quality unexpected and valuable in the context.

Neither style nor subtlety may be claimed for *The Beautiful Words*. It reads like one of those books for adolescents written with a social objective, in this case to inculcate an attitude of kindness to the unfortunate. Tommy – he has no surname – is a charming 17-year-old with a defective brain. He has every good quality except intelligence. His behaviour is that of a docile child, and the point of the novel is that he's in search of a parent: but the hearts of his benefactors can never be as pure as Tommy's. Circumstances place him successively in the care of a prostitute named Rita ('Some of the men Rita knew were perfectly horrid'), a dirty old tramp, a couple of squatters in a derelict house (yes, the author has gone deeply into the question of squalor in urban life) and a rich old lady with an ungenerous spirit.

It is sentimental to keep stressing the positive aspect of Tommy's disabilities: he is incorruptible as the result of a congenital deficiency, and he retains innocence only to the extent that he's incapable of elementary reasoning. His virtues are inadvertent, and there is nothing in the facile realism of the novel to suggest that he is meant to stand for more than endearing simplicity. We may be reminded of another innocent, Eric in Sylvia Townsend Warner's *The True Heart*, but Eric's thoughts and impressions were not rendered in terms of the utmost banality. That novel has a strangeness, a fairy-tale quality entirely missing from *The Beautiful Words*. Of course it's splendid, as Mervyn Jones implies, that someone has taken the trouble to teach the boy to recite Wordsworth (the beautiful words); and it's easy for the reader to relish the pleasure he gets from this unanticipated gift. The moral point appears to be that it's wrong to make assumptions about the degree of incapacity in these cases. But it isn't enough to enliven a sad and boring tale.

Chen Jo-hsi depicts a bleak world of slogans, labels, campaigns to identify and eliminate subversive traits. It's subversive, for instance, to sport a pink silk blouse, or to keep a drying rack when everyone else has dismantled theirs. At this quotidian level, loyalty to the state is bound to involve one in a certain amount of poking and prying: 'Mei Lao-shih . . . your place is directly opposite hers. Have you noticed any indiscretions?' This is absurd and distasteful, and enlightening for a reader not acquainted with the facts of day-to-day existence in Communist China. With these stories, Chen Jo-hsi has entered the genre of social criticism; her job is to record the persistence of personal confusions and peculiarities in spite of clear directives from above. The note of dissent and ridicule is muted, the ironies cautious and understated. A flat tone in the writing is probably the fault of the translators.

The fictional character Agatha Christie is far less forthright, resolute and interesting than the fictional characters of Agatha Christie. In short, Kathleen Tynan's heroine is a drip, a woman distressed to the point of inanity by her husband's bad behaviour. Pique, despair or psychological perplexity drives her to Harrogate where she registers at a hotel under the surname of Colonel Christie's mistress, and sits in the dining room uttering remarks like 'You must do what you can, not what you can't.' It's a curious, forlorn little episode which properly belongs in the detective novelist's biography. *Agatha* is subtitled 'A novel of mystery' but in fact there is nothing in the least intriguing or mysterious about this version of the affair at Harrogate.

Gillian Wilce

No Abiding City

News from the City of the Sun by ISABEL COLEGATE *Hamish Hamilton* £5.95

The title of Isabel Colegate's latest novel, its epigraph from *Hebrews* and occasional fleeting suggestions in the text (like Hamilton's semi-mad visions) hint at kingdoms not entirely of this world. But it remains only a hint in an otherwise firmly earth-bound book. The Whitehead brothers (vaguely anarchic Fisher with his fluctuating intellectual reputation and predilection for pretty, thin women; uxorious, practical Arnold; and reclusive Hamilton) have, in the early Thirties, established a secular community at the Abbey under Salisbury Plain. The community stays and changes, while visitors come and go. Some appear for a few sentences; others take up residence in the book; just one or two remain merely narrative links, unfleshed. The most important of the visitors is Dorothy, arriving by accident at the age of nine, unable to listen to Fisher's instant tuition because 'she was so anxious about being late'. Her links with the Abbey educate her, free her from home and remain implanted in her into middle age. It is through its impact on her that the community is most clearly justified, although she herself becomes a private, uncommunity-minded person.

Development is gradual and detailed during the Thirties and the war years, but the speed picks up until, during the Sixties, the effect is that of a galloping lantern-slide lecture: someone last glimpsed in nappies appears suddenly full-grown; happy hippies are replaced almost at once by more threatening, revolutionary counterparts. But the unevenness of the historical context is not too important since it is what the people in the community make of it that is the real subject.

Some of the novel's people share their author's penchant for wry observation. They reflect on what they do, how they relate, what they believe, and if what they say about social and political theory is often realistically imprecise, it none the less matters to them. They are aware of the effects upon them of the previous generation – poet Timothy's British-Raj father, the Whiteheads' mad father raving as his sons pinned him down on the vicarage floor, Dorothy's bigoted father obsessed with upper-middle-class propriety. Most of their lives include writing in some way or other. Hilda needs critical acclaim; Gerda's self-esteem is related to the value of her translation of Kafka; benefactress Marcella finds herself surprisingly in someone else's book; Fisher keeps deferring his masterwork on the perfectability of man, while Hamilton contains his own terrors by working on a life of the heretical Father Augustine. Timothy even gets into a fight about the death of the realistic novel.

Fisher ascribes to one visitor a 'detached way of looking at things which you might expect to be cold but is somehow the opposite, all bright awareness and sympathy'. This is not too far from a description of Isabel Colegate's own attitude. Her tone is cool, often amusing and amused, but she is never witty *at the expense* of her characters. Her occasional excursions into broader humour are rescued partly by unobtrusive affection and partly by accuracy of reaction to the farcical moment (communard Gerda, naked among the raspberry canes in order to prove a point, is torn between principle and embarrassment when children unexpectedly appear). Passion and madness are also kept in proportion by calm and unlingering, if acute, observation.

Robin Maugham

THE DIVIDING LINE

'right from the first chapter . . . the psychological interplay keeps us on tenterhooks' – *Elizabeth Berridge* D. Telegraph

'an irresistible storyteller' – *Francis King*

'a real spell-binder. It moves at a tremendous pace with surprise following on surprise. Constant suspense' *Alec Waugh*

'a beautiful shape, very swift moving, with characters who come vividly to life. The finale is horrifyingly effective' *Beverley Nichols*

£4.95

WH Allen

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Blake Morrison

A Bookworm in the Kitchen

Arcadia by CHRISTOPHER REID *Oxford* £2.75
The Weddings at Nether Powers and Other New Poems by PETER REDGROVE *Routledge* £2.95
Pasts by PAUL WILKINS *Carcanet* £2.95
Femmes/Hombres by PAUL VERLAINE, translated by Alistair Elliot *Anvil Press* £5.95

Fear of the imagination may not be something we'd normally expect of poets, but it would be hard to deny that in British poetry since 1945 that fear has been prevalent. Imagination has come to be associated with the unleashing of dark forces, and those forces, in turn, with the traumas of 20th-century history – fascism, the concentration camps, Hiroshima. It is hard to trace the origins of this idea, though it runs through the work of critics as different as A. Alvarez and Donald Davie, and the poetry of Ted Hughes has done much to reinforce it. But the assumption has grown that imagination is in some way dangerous, undemocratic, and that a level or moderate tone in poetry is more 'responsible'. Few poets feel happy with their low-keys and half-lights, but until now there has seemed little possibility of a way out.

It is too early to say yet whether the poetry of Craig Raine and Christopher Reid is the breakthrough we've been waiting for: so far there are only two first collections, Raine's *The Onion, Memory* and now Reid's much slimmer *Arcadia*, on which to form an impression. But already there can be no doubt of their literary-historical significance: Raine and Reid are the first mainstream British poets since 1945 to embark on a programme which makes imagination its priority, but which does so without lapsing into the shamanism and bardolatry commonly assumed to go along with it. For them imagination is *play* – the mind enjoying itself on life's surfaces rather than burrowing beneath. And though the world of appearances that they unfold is not without its darker elements, it's usually well protected from anything that – as Reid's 'A Whole School of Bourgeois Primitives' has it – 'might prove dangerous':

> Welcome to our peaceable kingdom,
> where baby lies down with the tiger-rug
> and bumblebees roll over like puppies
> inside foxglove-bells . . .

It is at times a rather too twee and comfortable world, but then comfiness is part of Reid's manner: the various leisurely poses in which we find him in *Arcadia* – on holiday, at dinner, in the park, visiting the zoo – imply that there's a time for poets to have done with dramatic intensities, and to relax and have fun instead. The Reid persona gets an unashamed pleasure out of life ('I love these gardens', 'I love these gulls', 'I love to be here'), and many of his poems are constructed as riddles which it is pleasurable to solve. These hedonistic structures are certain to irritate anyone looking for moral or political engagement. But they are not quite the poems of a dandy or aesthete: after reading *Arcadia* you feel that the world is a stranger, richer, more various place than you'd supposed, a feeling which it takes commitment of a kind to produce.

Play not only figures largely in the tone of *Arcadia* and in its subjects (a weightlifter, horse-jumping, rugby), it is also Reid's dominant metaphor. Like the mirror in his poem 'Patience', which 'says *Snap*!/to the wallpaper opposite', Reid turns up parallels and correspondences where they're least expected. A can-opener becomes 'a twirly dragonfly', a rugby scrum 'a thirty-two-legged spider that wheels and buckles/over the agony of its stubborn leather egg', kisses 'the snail-life of tongues', a whippet 'a framework for another dog'. Religious metaphors also figure largely, both for ironic contrast (these earthly flanks of pork, 'strung with ribs', as against angelic harps), and to locate sacred moments within the everyday. The other key metaphor is language itself, with Reid, 'a bookworm in the kitchen', discovering 'improbable fictions' wherever he looks: a dog 'in full pursuit of a green full-stop', a 'cache of commas' in the core of an apple, a volleyball which 'skips between four figures/like a decimal point'. The analogies come thick and fast, inviting the objection that this is obsessiveness, metaphor as illness. But now that structuralism has forced attention on to signs and decoding, Reid's basic method of misreading – getting things wrong in order to get them right, using a mock-innocent eye to make us see life afresh – seems a timely one. Comparisons with Craig Raine are inevitable. Both poets share the belief that a poetry which begins at home can nevertheless be exotic. But Reid's treatment of people is cooler, even crueller, than Raine's.

For Peter Redgrove imagination *does* mean 'going below'. In a note to his new collection he describes the process of 'deepening' as 'the source of all creativity' ('the poems descend, and return with something not thought or felt of before'), and in 'Pleasing the Black Vicar' he depicts himself as someone who wants 'to accept/The presence beyond the altar, beyond appearances'. The problem in the past has been that what Redgrove has brought back from his underground travels few persons of normal intelligence have much appreciated receiving; and indeed the suspicion has grown that it's not a prophet-like concern for deeper realities, but a basic contempt for human society, that makes Redgrove want to journey below so often. Yet there have always been enough good poems to make one feel that Redgrove might eventually come up with something worth having. In *The Weddings at Nether Powers*, as always, there are ten misses for every hit, but it's such a huge collection – 150 poems, some of them long sequences – that the successes soon mount up: among them I'd put 'Horses of the Dust', 'A Roadside Feast', 'Very Early Among the Islands', 'Radio', and the uneven but (at the end) very moving 'Living in Falmouth'.

Redgrove's mistake has been to see himself as a nature-poet rather than as a scientist. When he writes about the 'Other Church' of the natural world ('This cow is a church, its flesh and blood/Is a congregation, its bones the stone pillars'), he tends to sound like a kind of revved-up Wordsworth, pantheism in overdrive: it makes for the occasional striking line, but he has nothing very original to say. *But when Redgrove draws on his scientific* knowledge and training, which (unlike myth and the occult) make him *look* at things, then he comes into his own. Energy and electricity in particular provide him with powerful imagery – the electric wire in 'Tripped' ('rain strung like an abacus'), the television in 'Acting Earth' ('Its zoology of striped currents,/Its parklands flowering with electricity'), the surreal vision which ends 'Radio':

> And if you packed
> The History of Broadcasting into one
> ten-seconds,
> That would fry England, like an immense fish,
> loose on its bones.

There is some silliness here ('Platalow's Bung') and some of the old obscurity – lines like 'the blood clock of a scarlet ape that bleeds/Exactly at a new moon on the temple straw' – but in general Redgrove shows more interest in sustaining and working out images than he has done before. This collection is not easy going on a first reading, but once the leapings of Redgrove's mind have been got used to, many of the poems become surprisingly lucid.

Imagination, whether of the Reid or Redgrove variety, is not much in evidence in Paul Wilkins's *Pasts*. Wilkins sounds earnest and scrupulous, has fine moments in 'Suburban Cemetery', 'Definition' and 'Father', and shows great subtlety with rhythm and syntax. But like many of his young contemporaries, Wilkins is a nostalgia-junkie, believing that the past itself is a kind of cadence, and living in the present, if at all, as a reluctant stranger. Much of *Pasts* reads like a cloning from Hardy's *Poems of 1912-13*: here is the poet revisiting former scenes, wandering through graveyards, looking at old photographs and so on. It is a seductive mode, tempting the reader to surrender to a series of sad little *frissons*, and dissolving all it touches into a vague wistfulness – shadow, blur, haze, 'a drizzle of pasts'. But as epithet after predictably bereft epithet is trundled out, you begin to be sure that it is a convention of writing which Wilkins, if he is to develop at all, ought to get out of as soon as he can. A poet of his promise ought to be doing more than imploring, helplessly, 'come back, sense that I once loved'.

For those brought up on standard editions of Verlaine, *Femmes/Hombres* will come as something of a shock: 18 porno-poems in praise of women – 'Arses and cunts which gives the feels (sic) of Paradise' – are followed by roughly the same number in praise of boys. It looks like the perfectly structured bisexual text, but in fact a couple of poems intervene, in traditional manner, to settle in favour of boys: women are 'loveable all right', but it's boys who 'will always win the wise aesthetic poll'. Verlaine may not be at his best in the bedroom, but the poems in this volume have in the past been so little available (to this day only six of them appear in the French Complete Works), that Elliot's labour of love is welcome. To carry it out, he has gone not just to French dictionaries, but to Alex Comfort's *The Joy of Sex*: hence Verlaine's foot-fetishistic 'orteils, sucés les uns après les autres' becomes 'each toe mouth-organed'. There are times when Elliot turns gallic sensuality into saxon rough-and-tumble, but the collection is a useful check on stereotypes of the etherealism of French Symbolism.

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Olivia Manning

Front Pew

About Time: An Aspect of Autobiography by PENELOPE MORTIMER *Allen Lane* £5.50
You May Well Ask: A Memoir 1920-1940 by NAOMI MITCHISON *Gollancz* £6.50

The most, and, indeed, the only memorable character in *About Time* is the author's father who has already been treated at length in the *New Yorker*. A High Church parson called Fletcher, he had early lost his faith but gained instead a yearning for female flesh. The crowd of aunts, uncles and grandparents are briefly written off with a minor foible or two (Aunt Jessie 'a scrawny, sour woman', Aunt Phyllis 'faintly daring', the author's brother 'a moody figure' who had had a sister foisted on him) and quickly got out of the way. Rightly, one feels, for the Fletchers and Maggs as recorded here are not likely to interest the average reader. Uncle Bertie, author of *Isles of Illusion* and father of several half caste children, has slightly more life than the rest but it is the Rev. Fletcher who, in his relations with his daughter, takes on a separate existence.

> He started a Youth Club and preached his splendid, meaningless sermons to huge congregations of children – 15-year-old girls, who adored him, and spotty, adolescent boys. 'Life!' he bellowed. 'Believe in Life!' He grasped the edge of the pulpit, tears ran down his face, he laughed, he flung his spectacles into the congregation, narrowly missing my mother and myself, who sat, suffering tortures of embarrassment and misery, in the front pew.

Mrs Fletcher, a rather sketchy figure, having produced her children, deserted the marital bed and her husband, with his belief in life, took to pawing his daughter and once even tried to rape her. As a child, she dreaded being left alone with him. He 'had no style; he was all fingers and thumbs, slobbering and puffing and desperate with guilt'. A small, pretty woman, Mrs Fletcher devoted herself to the dead and a small school called the Little People's Garden, where her daughter attended.

Her school days over, Penelope Mortimer was sent to study shorthand without much success, then met and married a Reuter's man called Charles Dimont. She says somewhere she cannot remember why she married him and the years of this first marriage are unreal in her mind. Certainly the later pages that end with the author's 21st birthday are thin and seem hurried, as though she had grown bored with her own narrative. Charles Dimont is no more than a name and their life in Vienna, with the Nazis parading in the roads and the Jews being humiliated on the sidewalks, lacks substance. This is a pity. Perhaps now that she says she has finished with the conflicts of husband and wife (always the same husband and wife, or so it seems) she will return to those murderous times when we were all young and our world was disintegrating.

Naomi Mitchison is a more extroverted and vivacious writer than Mrs Mortimer and has the added advantage of a distinguished background. Daughter of Professor J. S. Haldane, sister of Jack Haldane, married to a Mitchison, she has lived from her earliest days among the chosen spirits of her age. Keats said of those similarly circumstanced: they receive as a right that for which the rest of us must sacrifice our youth. Mrs Mitchison is acutely aware of the privilege bestowed on her. It is her honesty, her refusal to excuse or extenuate the anomaly of combining wealth with left-wing views that gives her Memoir its attraction.

Her pages are filled with the famous figures of the Twenties and Thirties: Aldous Huxley, Julian Huxley, Auden, Arnold Bennett, Edward Garnett, Elizabeth Longford, Hilaire Belloc, Nehru, Wyndham Lewis, and a number of scholars and politicians who are now fading into obscurity.

As a young married woman, Mrs Mitchison lived in a manner that these days seems very grand indeed, giving rise to the title and, to some extent, the theme of the book: 'You may well ask how people like us – and there were a good many – came to call ourselves socialists and to join the Labour Party but without altering our way of life very much.' It is possible to laugh with, and even delight in, the absurdity of her position because she has so much enthusiasm in life, such a willingness to devote herself to any task in hand. She has, also, the enviable physical vigour that permits her to farm her own land. We may envy, too, the comfort of those days when large houses and gardens were kept immaculate by hosts of servants, but it was also a time when the Mitchisons' eldest boy, Geoff, died of meningitis, a disease now cured by antibiotics.

Mrs Mitchison is particularly perceptive in her chapter about writing and the need to write. The question 'Why Write?' has to be left unanswered but we who are no longer young can find consolations in her conclusions as a writer:

> Alas, as one gets older, there are fewer other pleasures: delight is imagined rather than experienced. The body is no longer a pleasure-giver; we have to be wary of it. Only the tick of the story-telling goes on. Only the words, appearing and offering themselves.

We hope that Naomi Mitchison will live to enjoy her own considerable literary gift for many years to come.

John Mole

Black Forest Sketches

Resinous landscapes
stretch themselves on canvas,
waxed, immaculate
and varnished with thin air.

A GB number-plate
outside the Gasthaus:
Everyone's bored crazy.
All we do is fish.

Transfiguration
of the boxed geraniums –
an open coffin
hanging from each sill.

In our school
they do not read the Märchen.
Babes in these woods
are always found.

Ladling eucalyptus
in his pinewood sauna
then the solarium –
He says: *We never die!*

I buy the stereo
for this Mercedes.
Now I have a ghost
in my machine.

Body and soul
absorb their own perfection:
one mistake
must surely cost a life.

Goodnight, my English friend,
you sleep now.
For tomorrow morning
I have plans.

In our review of *The Midsummer Cushion* by John Clare (NS 15 June) we omitted to say that MidNAG (Mid Northumberland Arts Group) were joint publishers of the book with Carcanet.

A brilliant historical novel

HOWARD CLEWES

I, THE KING

'A gripping story and interesting characters . . .' *Financial Times*
'Sheer narrative skill.' *Guardian*
'Exceptionally convincing battle scenes.' *The Observer*
'There's real anger, real characters, absolutely superb, underplayed descriptions . . . A good one.' *The Irish Times*

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Benedict Nightingale

Sweet and Sour Eyeballs

Peking Opera *Coliseum*
All Together Now by PETER BUCKMAN *Haymarket, Leicester*
Antony and Cleopatra by SHAKESPEARE *Aldwych*

Peking opera, like Peking cooking, describes a general style rather than a geographical speciality; and the company now at the Coliseum actually hies from Shanghai, and might as well come from Andromeda or the Crab Nebula, so different is it from anything we know in our own tiny corner of the cosmos. Imagine a troupe in which Lynn Seymour sings, and sings rather well, Geraint Evans energetically dances, and John Gielgud does stupefying somersaults over six-foot barriers, all to the accompaniment of what would have to be rechristened the Amadeus Saucepan Quartet.

Imagine that this company, which is of great antiquity, falls out of favour with Mary Wilson during her helmsman-husband's growing senility, and is prevented by her cronies from performing anything except such 'model-operas' as *Taking Conservative Central Office by Strategy*. Peter Brook is paraded round Whitehall in a dunce's cap, Margot Fonteyn sent to be re-educated in a Norfolk potato-field. Finally, imagine that the troupe slowly resurfaces in the Callaghan era, and, though not yet perhaps as athletically fluent in all particulars as in the great years of the Attlee dynasty, is once again able to tour abroad material that can be authentically described as historical-comical-pastoral-martial operatical -balletical - gymnastical.

You'll notice there's one omission from Polonius's updated catalogue. There was nothing remotely tragical about the four operas the company presented last Wednesday. A flock of ferocious vultures drives away some exquisite egrets and proceeds to pollute their island paradise, only to be outwitted, outfought and outcast by their resurgent victims. The heroic Meng Haigong leads an uprising, defeats the generals of the Aui dynasty, and plants the people's flag on the Yandang mountains. An abandoned taoist nun pursues her lover down the Autumn River, and overtakes his boat in the last reel.

The general message would appear to be that effort (and especially collective effort) is rewarded, that history is on the side of the virtuous and persevering, hope always justified; and those are not attitudes likely to appeal to the dedicated sceptics who tend to write our plays, people our auditoria, and make our civilisation what it is. Yet the mood is not mawkishly upbeat, still less insistently propagandist. The optimism is not that moral castor-oil the Gang of Four forced through its nation's gritted teeth, but the implicit optimism of folk-lore and fairy-tale, and aimed not at cultural nobs, but at those with the open-heartedness to enjoy Andrew Lang, the comedia dell'arte, Billy Smart, Christmas panto, the Royal Tournament, the indoor Olympics.

I kept wishing I'd bought extra tickets for my children, yet unashamedly enjoyed the evening myself. Though sets are either austere or absent – a red table, a flimsy wall – the performers themselves provide visual astonishment enough. After all, one doesn't often see a human vulture with five-foot feathers sprouting up and out of his goggles, or a military nabob who combines *in propria persona* the more extravagant aspects of an aviary, a flower-bed, and a rock upon which some super-patriotic explorer has planted no less than five national flags. And though the spoken dialogue was obviously incomprehensible to me, and anyway so stylised that it became a kind of high-stepping ballet in itself, the gestures and movements were eloquent enough to make the meaning unmissable.

The episode in which the lovelorn nun is ferried through foaming currents by an ancient oarsman has little more than a quaint charm. The other three offer steadily accelerating excitement: adagio, allegro, presto, and then a cadenza of acrobatic bravura. The Great White Egret, a lady who would surely be in the million-pound bracket if ever she made the logical leap into professional soccer, neatly sticks out one leg, then the other, then both at once, and each time sends a spindly spear skimming through the empty air back into the vultures' claws. In *At the Crossroads Inn*, a pugnacious pre-working of Peter Shaffer's *Black Comedy*, two combatants stalk each other in what's supposed to be the dark, whirling up and round, flailing their weapons, and rarely missing by more than the odd millimetre. *The Yangdang Mountains*, too, demonstrate the cast's ability to roll as they flip as they zoom; and the somewhat exhausted question arises – what can we, whose traditions have firmly severed the arts of opera, drama and circus, possibly learn from these multi-purpose dervishes?

From the critic's point of view, I fear, to be less tolerant of what passes for 'total theatre', notably on the fringe; and, from the performer's, perhaps to make more imaginative use of the one part of the body that doesn't need years of training to achieve athletic excellence, namely the eyes. If you think about it, those are organs western theatre-goers usually notice only when they are maimed or missing: when Sophocles skewers them, Shakespeare yanks them out, Feydeau gives them a squint, or Joe Orton spins them comically across the floor. But to Peking Opera they are an important part of their acrobatic and artistic armoury, a means of indicating slyness, fear, anger, and more. Never before in a theatre have I been so aware of the slant of the pupil, the suggestive flash of the white around it; and if they can do it without damaging their noses or causing their foreheads to fall in, so (surely) can we.

Still, some of our thespians can already boast surprising accomplishments. Who would have thought that Leicester rep could assemble a cast capable, not just of blowing educated raspberries down the orchestral brass, but of successfully mimicking the Black Dyke Band that the main character, an expatriate northerner, is hell-bent on re-creating in the Midlands? The point is that before his arrival these small-town instrumentalists actually enjoyed their somewhat shambolic get-togethers. Now they are presented with a commercial sponsor, told it's their duty to raise the morale of their slowly degenerating community, promised gigs, prizes, perhaps eventually glory in the Albert Hall. A local postman, whose cornet is below par, is threatened with the sack, as is the retired clerk who years ago founded the band. The leading trombonist, an amiable drunk, gets deprived of his saving bottle; and the B-flat bass, a surly trucker, is warned he'll be fined if he's late for rehearsals that now appear to consist, not of hit-or-miss lollipops, but of the disciplined dissection of an example of chauvinistic modernism called, simply, *Blenheim*.

There's much to remind you of David Storey, especially the Storey of *The Changing Room*, whose deftly understated view was that, though most of us might be alienated from our roots, spouses and work, we might sometimes achieve fulfilment and togetherness in our play. Peter Buckman takes a similar delight in sheer skill, but clearly feels bound to remind us that even our most innocent recreations may become prey to the marketing men, the planners and time-and-motion experts, and all the other killjoys of our increasingly charmless civilisation. One of the play's flaws, an occasional lapse into caricature, could probably be corrected by minor recasting; the other is the denouement, a mass walk-out that the author seems to regard as final, but we may suspect to be provisional only.

Yet the play's virtues, which vastly outweigh any failing, are intelligence, subtlety, compassion, and the balance to admit that while, for instance, the new bandmaster's motives may be suspect and his ambitions deadly, he can nevertheless browbeat exhilarating sounds from his players. Under his unsentimental baton there's gain as well as loss. The result, as unpretentious yet suggestive a study of social change as I've seen for some time, may perhaps be too eccentric for the West End; but Robin Midgley's production, with Clive Swift as the rasping tyrant and David Riley, Alan Starkey and Michael Griffiths as a cross-section of captives, is precisely the sort of regional success the National Theatre once promised to put on.

The Peter Brook *Antony*, in London from Stratford, still occurs in a vast, concave locker-room, with a Ptolemaic retinue palpably incapable of enjoying a picnic, let alone an orgy. With so little distraction, we should be able to concentrate more singlemindedly on the intimacies at the play's core; yet intimacy, affection, erotic passion, love are precisely the qualities that Glenda Jackson, a snide and splenetic lady-dictator, and Alan Howard, a glistening Lancelot on the skids, fail to communicate. They are essentially public beings trapped in a substantially private play, admirable up to a point, but implausible beyond it, for all their cuddling, yowling and anguished giggling *in extremis*. The death of Patrick Stewart's Enobarbus, a marvellously mellow voluptuary, moved me more than either of their ends; and, when that's so, something must be wrong.

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Art

John Spurling

No Regrets

John Singer Sargent and the Edwardian Age
National Portrait Gallery
Egon Schiele *Marlborough*

When Sargent painted the beautiful Duchess of Portland in 1902, he stayed a month at Welbeck Abbey. The first attempt was a failure, which, the Duke records, caused Sargent

> great annoyance, and very often he filled his brush with paint and then rushed at the picture, muttering strange Spanish oaths. After sitting to him for about a fortnight, my wife came down one morning to find a clean canvas on the easel, and the remains of the picture slashed right across and lying in a corner of the room. She was so overcome with fatigue and disappointment that she burst into tears . . .

Sargent, however, persuaded her to let him try again, altered her pose and rapidly completed the painting to such effect that a friend passing the window of the room where the canvas was standing mistook it for the Duchess and tried to speak to her.

Sargent has been rather brushed aside in the half century since his death. His own worldly success and that of so many of his sitters, the apparently effortless ease with which he made traditional portraits (Rodin called him 'the Van Dyck of our times'), and the luxurious age he typified and glorified have all contributed to his exclusion from serious consideration. When it came to the first world war he chose to show soldiers stealing apples in an Impressionist orchard or the orderly and almost cosy interior of a hospital tent, where he himself was laid up with 'flu in 1918. Twentieth-century cant demands suffering of its serious artists.

But if the Duke of Portland's story hardly suggests that Sargent suffered very deeply for his art, it goes far to explain his particular quality. He was dissatisfied with the first attempt, the Duke says, 'as he thought he had failed to reproduce the character of his sitter, nor could he make the work *move*, as he termed it, or live'. The final portrait depicts a tall goddess in a white satin dress with stand-up, fairy-queen collar and red cloak posed against the pillars of a marble chimney-piece – – Sargent characteristically elongates his figures and views them from below. But the regal elegance of the Duchess's pose only emphasises the vulnerability of her face. Her mouth is open, there is red round her eyes. It is as if the mutual breakdown of artist and sitter had brought both into a new relationship of sympathy. She lives and moves because he and she have thrown off the inhibiting grandeur of Welbeck Abbey. The thrust of Sargent's art is always towards informality and relaxation. He does not presume to uncover inward depths, a soul or a psyche, but he does set out to introduce us to a person – not always necessarily a likeable person, though his effects are too subtle for one to make snap judgments – and to ensure that, whatever that person's status, wealth or accoutrements, we focus on the human being not the incidentals. In that he tends to show people at their best and that he is a consummately smooth and skilful artist, he is a flatterer, but in that he makes individuals appear to live and breathe and naturally inhabit themselves and their surroundings, he is a realist more complete than the camera or psychologist.

The National Portrait Gallery's exhibition, which opened at Leeds and goes on to Detroit, is quite small but most carefully selected. There is a section devoted to the later charcoal drawings – Sargent got bored with portraits in oils and more or less gave them up in 1907 – as well as to the full-length, full-dress commissions. There are early portraits (prodigiously mature works for a man still in his twenties) done when Sargent, the child of expatriate Americans, was still essentially a French artist; and there is a room full of his marvellously fresh Impressionist-influenced watercolours. These were the paintings done to please himself and they convey a feeling of almost amateur delight (though never of amateur performance), as though the professional practice he had left behind were as remote from his present activity as medicine, the army or the law. The dim interiors of Venetian palazzos, fellow-painters at work in gondolas or beside summer rivers, members of his family asleep or reading in Alpine meadows, three people in a Spanish wineshop: these are tourist paintings which succeed in restoring to that jaded genre its humanity and a sense of heightened awareness.

Among the watercolours there is a small, early oil – done when Sargent was 22 – of his Capri model, Rosina, silhouetted dramatically against the evening sky and dancing a tarantella on the flat roof of his hotel. Another girl sits with a tambourine against a convenient chimney-stack. The painting somehow combines the attributes of both figures: taut, vital, transported with physical enjoyment like the dancer; relaxed, unselfconscious, indolently ecstatic like the girl with the tambourine. There are no side-issues, no yearnings, regrets or unacknowledged tensions. This is what it's like to be alive, you are to understand, and this is how you paint it. Sargent would have been a remarkable artist at any time, but considered against the hectic, devious insecurity of the late Victorians and Edwardians (the inner world portrayed, say, by Ibsen, James or Proust), he is like a cat sunning itself on the deck of a sinking ship.

The Austrian artist, Egon Schiele, who died in the 'flu epidemic of 1918 at the age of 28, is, one might say, somebody completely different. His naked, starveling figures are contorted into nervous attitudes which suggest the erotic possibilities of a concentration camp.

Yet, judged as an artist – the early portrait drawings in the Marlborough exhibition make the comparison easier – Schiele has the same natural grace as Sargent. If one cannot quite imagine Sargent's sitters, even with their clothes off, looking like Schiele's, Schiele's physical frankness is really only an extension to more private areas of Sargent's. Look at Schiele's self-portrait in a blue bathrobe and then at Sargent's portrait of Sir Frank Swettenham in the full-fig of a colonial governor. The similarity of hands, faces and poses is almost shocking.

Television

Eric Paice

Whitehouse Fly-Trap

'Countless, countless, *countless* people in this country, David, would never have known of oral sex had it not been forced into their consciousness by the media . . . and many, many people will find this distasteful . . .'. Mary Whitehouse is nothing if not quotable. She is also the most persuasive campaigner in town and eats young Teleturks for breakfast. Within the first few minutes of David Dimbleby's new interview slot *Person to Person* (BBC-1, Thursday), the young inquisitor was looking like a shamefaced schoolboy caught masturbating by the matron. Hoping, presumably, to throw her off balance, he led off with a replay of the painted nipple scene from Potter's *Pennies from Heaven*. But at the end of the clip it was the daring young Dimbleby who shifted uncomfortably in his seat. The matron just settled back and smiled at him indulgently.

'Nothing wrong with that', she beamed. 'In private. What people do in private is their own business, not mine. But it should not be forced into people's homes at ten o'clock at night when research proves the children are still watching.' Our David plodded on with his prepared script, ferreting around for skeletons in the lady's cupboard. Had not Mary herself fallen in love with a married man when younger? Indeed she had. 'But I never slept with him', she replied disarmingly. 'And that surely is the point, David.' When will the mediamen learn that there is no way of tackling the Ayatollah of Arkley on her own ground? She thrives on the publicity awarded her by her critics. But ignoring her will not solve anything either. The only sure way to exorcise her malign puritanism is to give her a nightly 50-minute slot on the box at peaktime. Within a week she'll have bored all her followers to death.

This England quotes were flying thick and fast on Tuesday night (*Our Man in Lusaka*, BBC-1). 'I do believe in Aid' (to wartorn Central Africa) said a limp lady second secretary attached to the Zambian High Commissioner's office, 'It brings one into contact with interesting people.' The documentary was presumably designed to show what a silly, yet loveable lot our diplomatic service is. Tennis amidst the turmoil. Lawn parties and damp handshakes with smiling Africans playing the same charades. 'One very much hopes', said a vexed official to a Zambian journalist, 'that the Queen's visit won't have any political significance.' The patient African did his best to point out that even if the British Diplomatic Service chose to regard the impending visit of the Head of the Commonwealth to a state bordering Rhodesia as no more than a harmless safari, the rest of Africa might reasonably expect a more positive outcome. Finally they all settled down to play the boardgame, Diplomacy, gleefully moving battleships into Bosnia, oblivious of the guerrillas

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at the gates. Can the Diplomatic Service really be so thick that they don't know when the Beeb is taking the piss out of them? Or perhaps they think it's funny. There are times when I feel genuinely sorry for the Queen.

Earlier the same night, the Beeb had pawned its peak hour to episode seven of the dreariest of all American imports, *Centennial*. Chocolate-box history where horses and riders gallop the endless plains but never sweat; freshly painted trains arrive at spotless stations without a speck of dust or oil on their sleek hides. Like all American soap opera it is grossly overlit. Pancake make-up must therefore be slapped on to the artistes' faces with a trowel. Inevitably it starts to crack under the lights and they all end up looking as though they have had plastic surgery. The token European refugee even had a mauve rinse. No wonder the Red Indians fled. This grotesque clown show is worth a mention only because it contained a nasty little poison sac at the heart of the saccharine. The loveable heroes, troubled by a couple of sniper assassins, surround the hut where they are hiding out. In the traditional Western, they would have called them out and staged what passes in cowboy mythology as a fair fight. No such niceties in *Centennial*. They burst open the door and mow them down before they can reach for their weapons. Back at the ranch an ineffectual sheriff merely wags a finger at them. No-one will be brought to trial. The lynch mob remain the heroes of the episode. Realism? Perhaps, but I suspect that this deliberate break from the traditional acceptance that no man is above the law reflects a growing movement in America, a return to the concept of private vengeance as a justifiable act and the implied impotence of the law. And since all the kiddies were up and assimilating the message, was the BBC switchboard jammed by protests from Mrs Whitehouse and her disciples? You betcha it wasn't. There were no nipples on display.

Granada's *The State of the Nation* assembled a galaxy of telly journalists and programme controllers into one studio to be harangued by Jeremy Isaacs on their own concepts of morality. They were given a hypothetical test case. The State of Freedonia, already the subject of two exposé documentaries, is putting pressure on the networks to stop them running a third about conditions in the salt mines. Any company that goes ahead may lose a lucrative contract to cover Freedonia's Olympic Games. How many of those present would be prepared to go soft on the salt mine story? With one accord they all swore that none of them would be so craven. Publish and be damned. All splendid stuff till Isaacs sneaked in a googly. Supposing their reporter returned to say that the rumour was false – that conditions in the salt mines were at least as attractive as the assembly line at British Leyland? What then would be their reaction? Like a shot came the response from the desk men – no story. Only Keith Kyle came out with top marks by declaring roundly that there certainly *was* a story, that Freedonia's salt mines were, in fact, being run according to the Queensberry Rules. They all stared at him balefully as though he'd let the side down. Despite the naïveté of the allegory, it was an intense, articulate and serious discussion about a vital issue. But no-one asked why such a programme had been relegated to the wasteland hour of noon on a Sunday. A touch of censorship? Perish the thought.

Dance

Bryan Robertson

Turns

The Tempest *Sadler's Wells*

'What the world needs is a good book keeper', exclaims the fed-up madame of the brothel examining reputations in Genet's play *The Balcony*. What modern dance often needs is a good editor to point to excesses of style, duration or obscurity. Last week, that shaping instinct was aroused at Sadler's Wells for the first half hour of Glen Tetley's full length ballet *The Tempest*, choreographed for the Rambert company, but it finally gave up. The ballet should not have been presented and it is hard to understand why nobody questioned its intentions at the first rehearsal. Shakespeare's *Tempest* is about the waxing and waning of imagination, the arrival of age, moving from one role and terrain to another, and the polarities of servitude and freedom in the creative spirit. Tetley's *Tempest* is a series of 'turns' and dances which lack dramatic momentum or discernible point in themselves as isolated events. The gloom of the occasion was compounded by a hectically insistent score by Arne Nordheim that exploited most of the clichés in recent academic theatrical music, and by the clumsy set, costumes and props of Nadine Baylis.

The convergence of talent which united Christopher Bruce, Rambert's principal male dancer, with Tetley and Baylis is formidable and has produced noble works in the past, beginning in 1967 with *Pierrot Lunaire*, which was seen by millions of viewers on TV. Baylis has made many splendid sets for the Rambert company. The company itself is full of good dancers. How could this farrago have happened?

For a start, the small stage is overloaded with a soaring, white curvilinear construction of swirling shapes which begins with a ramp at one side of the stage and comes to one of several inconclusive terminals at the other side in a small raised platform, like an *art nouveau* arum lily lectern thrust up into space. This busily inconclusive set is brought to fitful life by the light projections devised by John B. Reade, one of the finest lighting designers in the profession, but his shimmering butterfly-wing textures or stretches of pale opalescent colour, reminiscent of shell interiors, are fractured and thus confused by the overlapping components of Miss Baylis's set.

The costumes are either plain but unremarkable, like Prospero's simple tunic or Ariel's white tights with patches of bright colour, or richly awful – as in the heavily bouncing skirts, ruffles and ribbons of the three painted and bewigged goddesses Juno, Ceres and Iris. All through the ballet, miles of material is flung around the stage to suggest the heaving or billowing motions of the sea while dancers representing sea creatures or fairies plunge recklessly underneath it all to emerge either mistakenly or triumphantly, it's hard to tell, on the other side.

Meanwhile, the music gurgles, rasps, clinks, rattles and echoes in forceful indecision. Singers in the orchestra make wordless *'ooh aah'* noises in strident competition with electronic embellishments. Towards the end, some straight madrigals are thrown in for good measure. The programme notes imply that Tetley envisaged his *Tempest* as a present-day extension of a masque for dancers and musicians.

Dance cannot convey philosophical or metaphysical subtleties. It can only support a drastically simplified notion of character. But none of the choreography here is interesting on its own terms, overloaded as it is with pointlessly effulgent lifts and stage business which is dramatically opaque. Little of the action seems relevant to anything but static notions of character, motive or predicament. Caliban is either sullen and threatening or lecherous and drunk; Prospero is imperious or watchful, as well he might be; Ariel runs round the stage a lot; Ferdinand and Miranda look like a nice young couple who convey ardour through shyly or passionately supplicating gestures.

The Rambert company and Tetley are sealed off from reality by the enthusiastic audiences which dote on their stars and will, it seems, rapturously applaud anything. The same unreality largely prevails at the Royal Opera House, for both opera and ballet. Audiences are so elated to be there that they will clap anything with impartial fervour. It is a bad situation for performers to be trapped in; but the rest of the Rambert season (until 21 July) offers some tried and true alternatives, ending with four performances of *Cruel Garden*, the masterly Bruce/Kemp ballet about Lorca and the death of art.

Opera

Peter Conrad

Heaving Breasts

Cavalleria Rusticana and **Pagliacci** *Covent Garden*

Though *Cav* and *Pag* are always coupled as twin cases of noisy, lusty operatic realism, they're not so brashly simple as bad performances make them seem. In *Cavalleria* Mascagni distends the laconic, brutal anecdote of Verga's story, supplying operatic – which is to say ideally selfless – motivations for Verga's mean characters. Verga's Turiddu seduces Lola merely to vex her wealthy husband. Mascagni's hero, however, is (in Auden's phrase) 'a village Don Giovanni', who rebukes his conquests for having the temerity to desire him: repentance, he sanctimoniously tells Santuzza, is vain after the offence. Whereas in the story he swears to kill Alfio so as to spare his own mother's tears, in the opera he vows not to die so he can save the infatuated Santuzza.

Mascagni sets Verga's grubby case-history in a context of routine (the daily chores of the Sicilian village) and rite (the Easter service, which establishes the religious morality by which the characters superstitiously judge themselves, and suggests the sacrificial nature

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of Turiddu's slaying – he dies the victim of Santuzza's crazed love for him). Zeffirelli's Covent Garden production excels at this representation of domestic labour and communal festivity. The current revival introduces into Zeffirelli's pious society the overweaning Santuzza of Fiorenza Cossotto. She is a formidable singer, though by now her abuse of her voice's lower range has unsettled its top, and her volume is never less than stentorian. She plays Santuzza as Duse must have done in Verga's dramatisation. The downtrodden Magdalen is promoted to an exorbitant matron, ornamented like a Christmas tree, who totters across the piazza on vertiginous high heels. Her brassy attitudinising outdoes the cymbal-smiting din of Mascagni's score. She teeters on the steps of Turiddu's house, gnaws gnaws her shawl, rolls her eyes frenetically in the direction of the Easter procession, and variously staggers, grovels, crawls and dog-paddles across the cobbles. Her heaving breasts acknowledge on her behalf the applause after 'Voi lo sapete'. Only her hair maintains its lacquered composure.

Nor does the performance end with the opera. Cossotto stages her curtain-call as a cheer-leader's mad scene. First she recoils overawed from the torrent of applause (thus provoking more of it) and the dazing pop of flash-bulbs from on high. Then she steadies herself to brave the mob's adulation; a rococo flunkey sent on to present her with some flowers was, to his evident astonishment, recruited as a prop. But at last the strain of the public's adoration overcomes her, and she subsides to the floor, gratefully weeping.

Yet for all her antics, Cossotto's performance has a certain authenticity. Crass, demotic, visceral, she is the peasant she is playing. When Verga's Turiddu learns of Lola's treachery, he raves (in D. H. Lawrence's translation) that he'll rip out Alfio's guts. But instead he taunts her by singing under her window. Cossotto belongs to this tradition, in which singing is the prosecution of warfare by other means. Her chesty bawling batters her colleagues into surrender, and goads her audience to a blood-hungry frenzy.

Realism is opera is always parodic. Turiddu, as the title makes clear, is a rustic parody of the chivalric wooer, just as the clowns in *Pagliacci* parody the emotions in which they traffic; they can perform only if they don't feel the passions and distresses they are simulating. The tragedian parodies agony by acting it. When Canio's life becomes tragic, he not only ruins the play but (in Jon Vickers's astounding performance at Covent Garden) wrecks the makeshift theatre. Leoncavallo's tawdry hero is turned by Vickers into a low-life Otello – at first amiably middle-aged, but incited to violence by self-doubt and confusion. Vickers sings with heart-tearing tenderness, and acts with a galvanic rage which (unlike Cossotto's meretricious fits) is the more terrifying for his efforts to control and introvert it. The force of his dramatic individuality rethinks and renews the work. His final line, 'La commedia è finita!', is an utterance not of maniacal glee but of bewildered despair. Helpless and ashamed, shocked out of his fury into remorse, he gently gathers Nedda in his arms and, cradling her, stumbles away to protect his grief in privacy.

Teresa Stratas matches him in dramatic intelligence, if not in vocal splendour. Her Nedda is a doleful, crumpled, anorexic pierrot, a mannequin manipulated (as her jerky motions in the play suggest) by the needs of others. She squats disconsolately on the property boxes as if she herself had been unpacked from them along with the theatrical gadgetry. There is an alluring ambiguity to her presence. She is both an innocent child and a cynical, exhausted old woman. Yearning for freedom, she dances her song about the birds; but when she drops a cigarette she crushes it underfoot with a grimace of weary resignation. Stratas has a gift for anthological, allusive characterisation, and in her Nedda there are aspects of her domestically astute Susannah (when she lays the table in the play), of her pining child-bride Mélisande, of her spiteful Salome (when she whips Tonio), and of her naively carnal Lulu (when she callisthenically stretches herself in the sun). Covent Garden has had a middling, accident-prone season but – thanks to the volatile genius of Vickers and Stratas – it ends gloriously.

Films

John Coleman

Old Hat

Fedora (A) *Screen on the Hill*
The Champ (A) *Empire; ABCs Bayswater, Fulham and Edgware Roads*
The Mafu Cage (X) *Filmcenta; Odeon, Swiss Cottage; from 15 July, Phoenix*

The temptation is there to read Billy Wilder's latest movie, a long time reaching us, as his swan-song. Some, full of the memories of *Sunset Boulevard* it inevitably evokes and fuller yet with grateful emotion, might say his Gloria swan-song. My own hope is that the erratic maestro will arise from this premature grave to confound us with something a great deal livelier. Certainly, *Fedora* carries intimations of mortality. 'It's become a great gamble, and only phenomena like sharks and exorcists keep the gamblers at the crap table.' 'It's a whole different business now. The kids with beards have taken over.' Who said which?

The first is Wilder talking in 1976, when at work at Universal on the final script of *Fedora* with his familiar collaborator I. A. L. Diamond. The second is spoken by the cynical, bemused link-man, Detweiler (William Holden), a washed-up independent producer bent on persuading a legendary star out of retirement for the third time: it comes from the completed film a year and a bit on. Given the fate of *Fedora* (finally produced out of Bavaria Studios, coolly received at Cannes last year, now bravely retrieved by Romaine Hart for pilgrims to Haverstock Hill), one may be forgiven for detecting a note of tough weariness fraternally uniting the two observations. And indeed *Fedora* proves a happy hunting-ground for asides, wisecracks, swift summations all too easily applicable to Wilder and his works, and this work in particular. Much of this is conscious gamesmanship, but it can have unfortunate repercussions. Near the end, Detweiler says to the mysterious, chair-ridden Countess (Hildegard Knef), 'this would have made a much better picture than the script I brought you'. 'Yes,' she replies, 'but who would you have got to play it?'

Echo answers, who? Swanson as 'Swanson' may have been a gimmick, yet it was one on the grand scale, done in style. Here we have Knef; and, as the equally mysterious Fedora, nice Marthe Keller, consistently dressed like reclusive Garbo in large floppy hats and trouser suits: no Garbo she. The convoluted tale told through flashbacks and flashbacks-within-flashbacks, alters the Tom Tryon short-story original by importing the big, tricky twist earlier, about two-thirds through – and one should not, alas, divulge it, an act of critical decency that makes it damn near impossible to give a real sense of the event. Detweiler, who finds Fedora an apparent prisoner in a villa on Corfu, watched over by the Countess, a disgraced plastic surgeon (Jose Ferrer), a baleful Miss Balfour (Frances Sternhagen), and a bodyguard chauffeur, is supposed to be our stand-in – his voice over is often heard – and his belated realisation of what is actually up to coincide with ours. The revelation clarifies such little enigmas as a drawer full of white gloves, notebooks crammed with the handwritten statement, 'I am Fedora', the doctor's dilemma and so on. These carefully planted items would be more fun if one hadn't (false modesty to pretend otherwise) guessed most of the truth long before dumb old Detweiler. What does that leave us with?

To continue the double-talk, Fedora is the ultimate bitch-queen, resolved to hang on to fame beyond the coffin. The film proper opens with her throwing herself, after Anna Karenina, in front of a Paris train and subsequently spins off from that coffin into a series of smaller, Chinese boxes of disclosures. One approach to *Fedora* reckons it pretty tragic, high and moving matter, with a maimed childhood and the loyalty of such as Balfour taking their feeling toll. Since I hardly believed a move in the brittle plot, that avenue stayed closed. Yet not quite all is lost. At their worst, Wilder and Diamond have a shrewd way with the crude and the Hollywood insider's dialogue rings both cracked and true. 'Remember *Zorba the Greek*?' asks Detweiler's amiable hotel manager. 'I was in it.' There's gossip of 'the golden bed where you made love to Robert Taylor'; when the Countess turns down Detweiler's re-jig of *Anna K.* ('Garbo did it twice'), the fellow bounces back with 'So what? This time we can do it right'; a caustic flashback has the young Detweiler wading into a studio pool to slap a leaf over the young Fedora's boobs. Henry Fonda and Michael York pass through as themselves, or something like. Everyone has a past roll-call of names: the doctor had treated Franco, Coco Chanel, Paul Getty; funeral cards arrive from Federico, Jean-Paul Sartre and 'Lord Olivier of Brighton'. But, as the Countess croaks at Fedora's lying-in-state, 'We've had enough of that Valse Triste – it's rather tacky'. What a break if Wilder could rediscover the authentic tackiness of his *Double Indemnity*. Though there we *are* going back a bit.

A few reels deeper into the past was King Vidor's *The Champ* (1931), with Wallace Beery and Jackie Cooper. It must have had more going for it than Franco ('I specialise in remaking the classics') Zeffirelli's updated version. Jon Voight is, when he remembers, the shambling, gambling ex-champ with an 8-year-old son, the straw-blond Ricky

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Schroder, who idolises him, and an ex-wife in Faye Dunaway, who has become a grand fashion designer and married a gerontologist. The gerontologist might have found rich pickings in the script, which – to cut a flabby story to the bone – has the Champ win a last fight and die in the dressing-room, handing over the kid via a prolonged aria to the previously rejected arms of Miss Dunaway. All cry so copiously here, the principals and such golden oldies as Elisha Cook and Jack Warden, that had the camera descended to floor level, instead of tilting up to show the Champ's corpse, one would surely have caught Alice and her creatures enjoying a quiet swim.

Voight does an in-and-out impersonation of Brando in *On the Waterfront*; flamingoes fly by at Hialeah race track and the posh audience at a Dunaway-commered fashion show seem to have been dressed, all in white, à la Cecil Beaton; no expense has been spared on this chic, stupid weepie. As for the brutish fight, both men would have been KO'd after the first minute. Karen Arthur made the three-quarter-good and barbed study in hysteria, *Legacy*, starring Joan Hotchkis in her own play. *The Mafu Cage* is incautiously taken from an exotic French *pièce*. Mad Cissy cavorts unhealthily in a Los Angeles apartment crammed with Africana, loud with jungle music, and fitted out with a cage where she keeps her monkeys to draw and now and then kill. Her elder sister, when not employed staring up a large observatory telescope, pampers the wild nature-girl and helps bury the simians. A touch of incestuous lesbianism lends spice and things predictably get worse.

Sport

Russell Davies

Medium Pace

Sebastian Coe's 800 metres world record was achieved with a smoothness that plainly astonished Coe himself, let alone the rest of us. Bjorn Borg's Wimbledon win by three sets to two over Tanner (you read it here first, though you were quite right not to believe it) was not the most convincing of his performances, yet with Borg one always feels – because he does – that the really big points will find him ready. These things were wonderful to see. But as readers of the NS know only too well, it is possible to tire of relentless excellence, so this week I went in search of relentless incompetence. Where better to look for it, after all the signposting in Bob Willis's new book (*Diary of a Cricket Season*), than Edgbaston on a Sunday?

Edgbaston last Sunday was a good deal less lively than you will currently find it during the Indian Test, but I must say the big, greyly wooden stands were quite healthily strewn with spectators large and small. The larger they were, the more eager they seemed to lay bare the ghastly quivering evidence of beer's popularity in Birmingham. Hoarse cries right from the start testified to the accumulated desperation of recent weeks: Warwickshire's only return from eight Sundays had been two points from a wash-out. One of the reasons for this unsuccess was apparent as soon as the visitors, Notts, went in to bat. For in Willis, they faced a man not just physically incommoded but in every sense embarrassed by the restricted run-up rule. As he plunges away from the starting-line, Willis-on-Sunday looks like an exasperated uncle setting off across a soft beach in pursuit of an incorrigible nephew, or aunt. Only rolled-up trousers and a shrimp-net are required to complete the picture. I felt extremely sorry for Willis as his valiantly short-pitched opening burst went skewing off the bat of Basharat Hassan for the first of the runs that were to take the Basher to a comical century. Having seen John Player games only in the foreshortened and Arlottised TV form before, I was suddenly sure that their bowling rules are wrong in putting down pace, and encouraging bowlers of naturally mediocre-medium pace to persist in and consolidate their infuriating averageness.

The pitch was sited well away from the Test wicket, and Basharat, apparently a late replacement in the Notts team, made full use of his proximity to the boundary. Many of his postural variations (particularly his potty tumbling routines behind the stumps) have something in common with those of Manuel the Waiter; but Basharat hits a six as tidily as most, and on this occasion managed four. Randall, the star turn, after dobbing an exquisite late-late cut for four off his first ball, swiped too early at Perryman and gave Amiss at long-off what is topically known as a 'Skylab' catch; however, the batsmen crossed while the ball was disputing with gravity and Basharat resumed the game with one of his sixes. And so the innings proceeded towards a total of 215, arrested only once in startling fashion – when Kallicharran, lurking in his beautiful cream hat on the square leg boundary, shot forward and dived ('grovelled', one might have said, but for the unfortunate cricketing history of the word) to catch Birch improbably off Perryman.

In mid-afternoon, the Benefit Bucket came round for Neil Abberley, who, confusingly, was not playing; and one had a chance to study the John Player match programme. It was worth looking twice at the photo on the cover, where a beefy batsman could be seen thrashing the ball skywards into the off. The startled fieldsman in the middle distance – a chunky D'Oliveira type – had quite clearly had an absurd mop of sable hair painted on him, leaving space on his skull for a forehead approximately two inches wide. Baldness and greyness, and possibly intellectuality too, it would seem, are frowned upon by the thrusting cig-happy sponsors.

Where did Warwicks go wrong? Was it the 'Sound start' principle (death to England in the Prudential) that meant sending Amiss and Kallicharran, indubitably their best batsmen, in first? Amiss was unlucky, actually, sending a low, violent six straight for the serried bellies on the short boundary, only to have it sizzlingly cut off at the fence by Eddie Hemmings. This was easily the high spot of Hemmings's afternoon which otherwise consisted of eight painful overs (for 51) in front of a crowd that felt entitled, having only just parted company with Eddie from Warwicks, to treat this amiable schoolmasterly figure with pretty unremitting scorn. The most successful Notts bowlers were Hadlee, inevitably, whose natural elasticity allows him to lean swiftly into a good short run-up (in spite of his huge old toe-curled boots); and the Yorkshire recruit Bore, who is now frankly fat and as tediously medium-paced as anyone else.

It was finally left to the incoming Willis to hit ten runs off the last two balls. This task proved beyond the Diarist's powers. Without pausing to see where his partner Humpage had despatched the last, useless delivery, he stalked off in the manner of one who had not wanted to be there, had not enjoyed being there, and would do his best not to come again. The rest of us, unfortunately, had had a good time. Well over 400 runs, with spectacular hitting and catching, are good to watch even when the bowling is a series of improvisations, stopgaps and jokes. Warwicks left the field still boasting their two-point bonus for not playing at all. The following day, on the pleasant club ground of Knowle and Dorridge, the absent Abberley could be seen hitting 102 not out for the second team, including several sixes into the adjoining tennis courts. A tiny black opener called A. Sam got 87, losing the ball at least three times in a distant hedge. Is it possible that the right first team is not being picked?

Weekend Competition

No 2574 **Set by B. Mooring**

A relaxing comp. for your summer hols: clerihews about 'media personalities', but they must come in pairs and be about people who are linked in some way or other, e.g. Morecambe and Wise, Anna Ford and Jon Snow, Peter Porter and Erin Pizzey. Closing date is 27 July.

Result of No 2571 **Set by Gavin Ewart**

I asked for limericks modelled on 'There was a young lady of Exeter', concerning a similar person from Uttoxeter.

In self-defence, as it were, I wrote my own before I started judging: 'What a beautiful girl from Uttoxeter!/The men raised their hats and their cocks at her,/they worshipped each titty —/and she was so pretty/the Lesbians lifted their frocks at her.' I also checked possible rhymes in a rhyming dictionary, true (box, cox, pox, fox, phlox, sox) and less true (hocks, locks, cocks, rocks, Jocks).

The limerick had to scan, it had to rhyme (on the Exeter model). No good rhyming maiden/laden/Aden. Ingenuity was shown here ('a rock sitar', a 'clock-setter', 'two crocs ate her', 'a fox ate her', 'Threw two Lears and 14 Prufrocks at her', 'bagels and lox at her', 'chocs at her'); but 'buttocks at her', 'forelocks at her', 'bollocks at her' and even 'two-cock Satyr' showed weakness (Tim Hopkins, otherwise first class).

I was called a 'baroque setter', 'a silly mock-setter'. James Michie's *cri de coeur* 'May you die of the pox, setter!' struck a chord beautifully echoed by R. D. Condon. For the best obscene one I'm giving a prize to Jebediah Barrow but not quoting him (editorial pusillanimity), with thanks for a limerick from *Cythera's Hymnal or Flakes from the Foreskin* (1870), in the Edward Lear mode: 'There was a young girl of Uttoxeter/And all the young men waved their cocks at her./From one of these cocks/She contracted the pox,/And she poxed all the cocks in Uttoxeter.' This is what dirty limericks are supposed to be. Dirty.

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Prizes (£5) to Herbert Kretzmer, R. D. Condon, D. Kartun, Bill Greenwell, Kate McPower, Brian Levison. Prizes (£3) to Tim Hopkins, Jebediah Barrow, L. W. Bailey, Alastair Chambre, George Cowley, Bob Scott. Prizes (£1) to witty rule-breakers P. M. G. Shiel and J. J. Webster, for whom no room.

A kinky young girl from Uttoxeter
Adored having men wave their socks at her.
She was cleansed of this stain
By a priest from Dunblane
Who quoted St Paul and John Knox at her.
HERBERT KRETZMER

There was a young girl from Uttoxeter
Who'd rather you kicked or threw rocks at her
Than made her the source
Of ideas for coarse
Comps set by some low-minded Jock setter.
R. D. CONDON

A horsewoman of charm at Uttoxeter
Caused a scene with much shaking of locks at her.
When announcing 'Hunt cup'
The P.A. mixed it up
And began a stampede by the jocks at her.
BRIAN LEVISON

A teacher of tots in Uttoxeter
Who chucked their constructional blocks at her
Was thinking 'Aggression
Is just self-expression'
When a volley of paperback Spocks hit her.
KATE MCPOWER

There was a young girl from Uttoxeter:
The Black Papers (Boyson & Cox) at her
Side, she flunked spelling,
And even more telling,
Falling standards prevented her from finishing even a simple form like a limerick correctly.
BILL GREENWELL

There was a young girl from Uttoxeter
Who noticed that men waved their cocks at her.
This would cause some surprises
In nearby Devizes,
But it's what they all do in Uttoxeter.
D. KARTUN

There was a young girl from Uttoxeter
Who one dreary night had a fox at her;
She let out a squeal
For his knob was like steel,
But she had quite a shock when the pox hit her.
GEORGE COWLEY

There was a young girl from Uttoxeter
While out on a date with two Jocks at a Disco in Wick
Slipped off with a Mick.
No wonder those two Jocks threw rocks at her.
BOB SCOTT

There was a young girl from Uttoxeter
Who kept hens but refused to have cocks. It a-Rose from her youth,
When some rather uncouth
Farm-hands raised up their smocks at her.
ALASTAIR CHAMBRE

There was a young girl from Uttoxeter
Who made oarsmen all gape through locks at her.
At their annual ball
They agreed, one and all,
They would craftily point their small cox at her.
L. W. BAILEY

She was caught, a young girl from Uttoxeter,
In *flagrante delicto* – two Jocks at her,
As the customers came,
Cameras flashed (to their shame),
And the photos were captioned: 'Two-cock Satyr'
TIM HOPKINS

Tony Miles

Chess

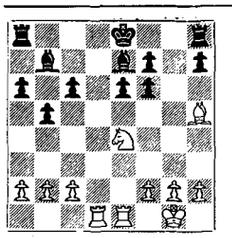
No 140 **New Tactics**

The 5th Vidmor Memorial tournament, held at Bled and Portoroz in Yugoslavia recently, turned out to be one of the most exciting events I have played in for some time.

Having been much impressed by Korchnoi's successes – I confess I had never really been able to understand his thought processes – I resolved to try and broaden my style. With no particular preparation I deliberately headed for the type of tense complex positions I had always shied away from in the past. The result was very nearly sensational. I won six games, all fairly convincingly, but lost four. Of these four two came from totally winning positions – in one I just had to find two good moves to force my opponents resignation, instead I found three bad ones and forced my own, the second I give below and in the other two I had slightly better 'completely unloseable' positions and committed amazing atrocities. Consequently the overall result was nothing special, but for the first time in many years I had the feeling that I was actually learning something, and may be even improving.

White: A J Miles **Black: M Quinteros**

1.P-Q4, N-KB3; 2.P-QB4, P-B4; 3.P-Q5, P-KN3; 4.P-B3!? (Korchnoi beat me with this at the Olympics) **P-Q3; 5.P-K4, B-N2; 6.B-Q3, 0-0; 7.N-K2, P-K3; 8.QN-B3, PxP; 9.BPxP, P-QR3; 10.P-QR4, Q-B2; 11.P-QN3!?** (an unusual try at restricting Black's Q-side play) **QN-Q2; 12.0-0, N-K4; 13.B-B2, R-K1; 14.K-R1, R-N1; 15.P-R5, P-QN4; 16.PxP e.p. RxP; 17.B-Q2, P-B5?! 18.B-K3, R-N1; 19.B-N1, KN-Q2; 20.PxP, NxQBP; 21.B-Q4, N(2)-K4; 22.R-R2!** (guarding the 2nd rank, maintaining pressure against the RP and preparing to take over the long diagonal). **B-R3; 23.B-R4, N-Q2;** (ID . . .R-K2; 24.P-B4, N-N5; 25.Q-R1! theatening 26.P-KR3, N(5)-K6, R-B3) **24.Q-R1! R-B1; 25.BxN, QxB; 26.P-B4, B-QN2; 27.N-R4,** (Eyeing the QB-file) **KR-K1; 28.N-N3, QR-B1; 29.R-QB2, Q-N5?!** (Time trouble approaching) **30.Q-B1! N-K4;** 'Or N-R4; 31.B-B3, N-B5; – N-N6, Q-N2 – 32.B-R1) **31.RxR, BxR; 32.N-N6, B-Q2; 33.Q-B7,** (Quinteros later pointed out Q-Q1 but the test is just as good) **B-N4; 34.PxN, BxR; 35.P-K6! R-KB1;** (If PxP; 36.N-Q7, B-N4; 37.N-B6, ch. mates) **36.P-K7?** (Time trouble 36.N-Q7, inter alia, wins immediately) **R-K1; 37.N-Q7, B-KN4; 38.QxP, B-N4; 39.N-B6ch, BxN; 40.QxB, Q-Q8ch; 41.B-N1, R-QB1;** Now the game was adjourned. I could draw immediately by N-B5, or play trickly for the win with Q-N5 (R-B8? N-K2!) Instead I sealed the horrific **42.P-R3??** completely overlooking – **R-B8; 43.Q-N6, QxBch; 44.QxQ, RxQch; 45.KxR, P-B3;** with a won ending for Black. The rest is too painful (and long) to recall. I resigned 25 moves later.



Problem No 140

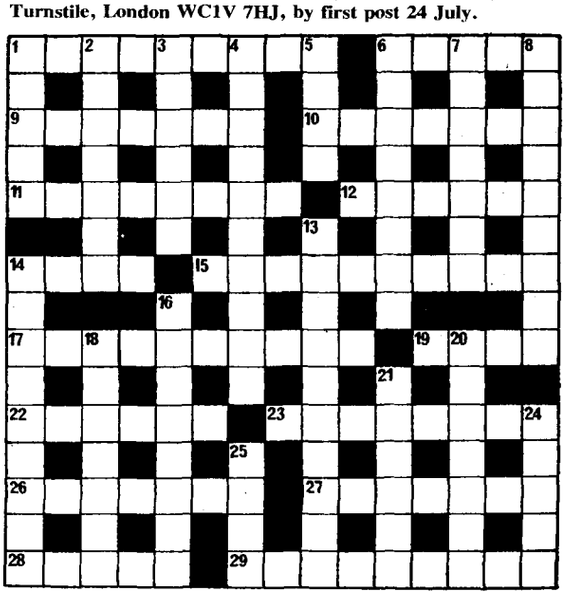
Black to play has an extra pawn but is under some pressure. Who stands better and how should the game go? Answers to me at the NEW STATESMAN postmarked not later than 25 July.

Solution to Problem 138

1.R×Nch! K×R; (Q×R, B7ch mates) 2. Q-B8ch, K-B2; 3. B-N6ch! Resigns if K×B; 4.Q-R5 mate, or . . . K-K5, Q-N8ch and mate next move.

Weekend Crossword 1309

PRIZES: Book tokens of £2 for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1309, New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ, by first post 24 July.



ACROSS

1 Traveller has to go by before green changes (9).
6 Out of sight but upsetting the prude (5).
9 Conclude there is no very hot place (7)
10 Mount in strength although a Third World country (7).
11 The return vehicle I catch, being a disciplinarian (8).
12 Claim an advantage when holding a king (6).
14 What must be sacrificed for a second in bed (4).
15 The intensity of excitement is loud always at the ground (5,5).
17 Rhyming exodus (5,5).
19 Sharp as a Spanish hero (4).
22 It is strange to give a quotation about an animal backwards (6).
23 Is repeated without king returning for people (8).
26 'Dear Sir, Turning to the attack . . . ' (7).
27 Vehicle wrongly takes mob in before you and me (7).
28 A wise man is Augustus to follow his mother (5).
29 Plant which destroys a weed in a short time (9).

DOWN

1 I enter the carriage as king (5).
2 Is a long way to the south so expeditions are made (7).
3 Wager one has turned into an insect (6).
4 Third fruit? (10).
5 After the enthusiastic reception the learner would make a composer (4).
6 Exercises necessary when journalists are about to have a meal (8).
7 Rave about a bird being extremely foul (7).
8 Marriage in the nude possibly unique (9).
13 Resort where a boy goes to school (10).
14 Rope with small weight as means of communication (9).
16 Non-believers find lies being broadcast (8).
18 The trouble with boxing is that it is full of love (7).
20 What a bore to mind about freedom! (7).
21 Showed boredom when study method was set up (6).
24 Fibre which makes a girl hold one up (5).
25 Killers as an afterthought (4).

SETSQUARE

Solution to No. 1307

C	H	A	R	A	B	A	N	C	■	B	A	T	C	H
H	■	B	■	L	■	R	O	■	R	■	I	■	E	■
A	V	A	I	L	■	H	A	R	B	I	N	G	E	R
F	■	S	■	E	■	A	■	P	■	E	■	E	■	O
F	R	E	I	G	H	T	■	O	F	F	E	R	E	D
■	■	M	■	E	■	■	R	■	E	■	■	■	■	O
F	I	E	L	D	F	A	R	E	■	R	E	F	I	T
L	■	N	■	■	L	■	A	■	■	■	A	■	U	■
A	C	T	E	D	■	B	I	L	L	I	A	R	D	S
U	■	■	R	■	A	■	■	■	M	■	R	■	■	■
N	E	A	R	E	S	T	■	S	U	P	P	O	R	T
T	■	T	■	S	■	R	■	H	■	E	■	W	■	R
I	R	O	N	S	T	O	N	E	■	R	A	I	S	E
N	■	M	■	E	■	S	■	B	■	I	■	N	■	A
G	A	S	P	S	■	S	T	A	R	L	I	G	H	T

Prizewinners to No 1307

Jinny Johnson (London SW1)
Mrs E. Gordon (London NW3)
J. S. Pyett (Weymouth)

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APPOINTMENTS

FINANCE MANAGER/ ACCOUNTANT

A Finance Manager/Accountant is required by the Leicester Theatre Trust Limited (Annual turnover £1 million) to be responsible to the Administrative Director for the operation of the theatre's accounting systems and general financial information.

Candidates for this position need not necessarily be qualified, but must have experience of preparing management accounts, cash flow statements and supervision of office staff.

Application in writing, providing details of previous experience, by the 21st July 1979, to Administrative Director, Haymarket Theatre, Belgrave Gate, Leicester LE1 3YQ.

Haymarket Theatre Leicester

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EXPERIENCED PERSONNEL OFFICER

Required to advise on and administer the Personnel Policies of the Association. A good knowledge of Industrial Relations legislation and practice is essential.

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The Under-Secretary, Administration,
BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION,
Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9JP.
by **31 July 1979**

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requires a

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Apply to: **Richard Balfe, RACS, Political Department, 147 Powis Street, London SE18 6JN.**

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Contact: **Roger Oliver, National Eczema Society, 5/7 Tavistock Place, London WC1H 9SR. Tel: 01-388 4097.**

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London SW4 7TA.

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Salary £6,000 +

This post involves overall administration and financial control of the Students' Union. Duties will also include the undertaking of research projects. Previous experience preferred. Details and application forms **(returnable 28 July)** from: **The President, Students Union, The Polytechnic, Wulfruna Street, Wolverhampton WV1 1LY. Tel: Wolverhampton 26979.**

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2. **Helsinki Final Act.** A candidate already concerned with the subject would be favoured. Honorarium offered.

For further information write or phone: **Human Rights Committee, UN Association, 3 Whitehall Court, SW1A 2ER.**

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The person appointed will need a sound knowledge of the TUC and its affiliated unions both nationally and locally, and proven administrative and representative ability. Trade unionists with relevant experience are invited to write as soon as possible for an application form and further details to: **The General Secretary, Trades Union Congress, Congress House, Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3LS.**

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ADMIN. GRADE IA

Applications are invited from candidates for this post which involves responsibility for the bar, shop, conference and other services in the University of London Union building. The Union provides for social, cultural, intellectual and recreational activity on a university and inter-collegiate basis and is the focal point for student representation to the University authorities.

The Union is extensively reorganising and developing its services and offers an excellent position for candidates with experience of bar and shop operations. Other responsibilities will include the maintenance of the six floor building, which includes a swimming pool, squash and badminton courts, sauna, and an extensive catering operation. High standards of efficiency are essential. Previous student union experience useful although not essential.

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Further particulars available from the Personnel Officer, University of London, Senate House, Malet Street, London WC1 7HU (tel: 01-636 8000 ext. 15) to whom completed applications, together with the names and addresses of two referees, should be returned by 17 August 1979.

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Jeff Staniforth 01-549 9961
or write to **Kingston Polytechnic Students' Union, Penrhyn Road, Kingston-upon-Thames, Surrey.**

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For further details please contact:

The Administrative Officer,
Centre for Information and Advice on Education Disadvantage,
11 Anson Road,
Manchester M14 5BY.
Telephone: 061-225 8355 (answering service 5 p.m.-8.30 a.m.)

CLOSING DATE: **26 July 1979.**

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Applications close on 15 September 1979.

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Application

Application forms may be obtained by writing to:

The Office of the Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies, Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia B3H 4H6.

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PROFESSIONAL MAN, 48, interested in art, film and theatre, wishes to meet lady of similar interests, London area. Box 5375.

BACHELOR, 31, 5'7", cheerful, easygoing, sincere, 'largish', sense of humour, seeks pleasant, romantic lady, SE London area, to share (hopefully) mutual interests in music especially; also politics, theatre, films, reading, country walks/pubs, socialising and quiet evenings. Own flat and car. Box 5732.

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LADY, 56, small, fair, (academic background), overseas visitor, seeks m. friend. Likes art, writing, theatre, maybe travel. Box 5697.

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ARTICULATE, sincere graduate, unattached, understanding, wishes meet intelligent lady, fifties or thereabouts, for, hopefully, ongoing one-to-one friendship. Box 5707.

ATTRACTIVE MALE, 42, tall, slim, unattached, own central London house, needs younger lady with modern outlook on life. Box 5370.

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CHARMING, ATTRACTIVE lady interested in theatre, films, concerts. Wishes to meet widower over 40. Box 5709.

MALE, 50, professional, travelled, seeks warm, caring, lasting relationship with f., slim, 30+, London/SE. Box 5726.

SURREY LECTURER, single, needs lady friend, 35-55. Will 'phone replies. Box 5739.

ATTRACTIVE WOMAN, 36, slim, cultured, sks kind man (30-50), to share love, life, laughter & children. Box 5805.

REDUNDANT College of Education Lecturer (f.), late fifties, interested in history, politics, art & travel, but also cooking & home-making, would like to meet male, perhaps in similar circumstances, to share retirement. Box 5557.

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AN INTELLIGENT, spontaneous girl, 23-34, who loves books, music, wild life but not TV, cars, alcohol, and has yet to meet a compatible male, might solve 2 people's problems by writing to Box 5802.

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Meetings

PUBLIC ENTERPRISE GROUP — 'Public Sector Now', speaker Stuart Holland MP. Fabian Society, 11 Dartmouth St, London SW1. 14 July 10.30 a.m.

ASSN OF LABOUR SOCIAL WORKERS. The Labour Party Pressure Group for those concerned about Social Policy and Social Work. Come to our meeting to discuss future activities, 27 July, 6.30 p.m. Cole Room, Fabian Society, 11 Dartmouth St, SW1. All members of the Labour Party are welcome.

CENTRAL LONDON FABIAN SOCIETY. Peter Keen of British Rail on 'Running British Rail' at 5 Tavistock Place, London WC1, Wed. 18 July, 7.30 p.m. All welcome.

ICA EVENTS. The Mall, SW1. 19 July 1 p.m. William Shawcross on his new book 'Sideshow Kissinger, Nixon and the Destruction of Cambodia' 20 July 8.30 p.m. 'Fixtures & Fittings' featuring G. A. Cohen, Robbie Kravitz and friends. 75p. 930 6393.

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NEW STATESMAN

Vol. 98 No. 2521
13 July 1979

Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ
Tel: 01-405 8471 Telex: 28449
Cables: Newstat, London WC1

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Theatres

ALDWYCH THEATRE (Royal Shakespeare Company). 836 6404. Recorded bkg info. 836 5332. 'Antony and Cleopatra' (sold out until 26 July), John O'Keeffe's 'Wild Oats' and Mikhail Bulgakov's 'The White Guard'. See daily press for dates and times. RSC also at The Warehouse in Pam Gem's 'Piaf', David Rudkin's 'Hippolytus' and Tom McGrath's 'The Innocent'.

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